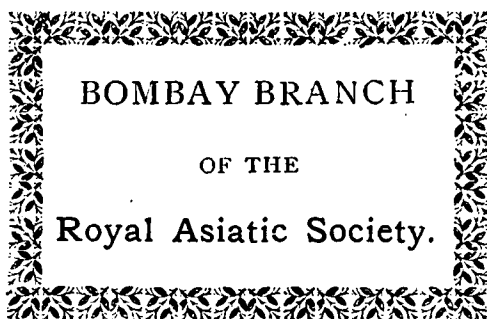


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ACCOUNT  
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LIFE AND WRITINGS  
OF  
THOMAS REID, D.D. F.R.S. EDIN.

LATE PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.



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BY  
DUGALD STEWART, F. R. S. EDIN.

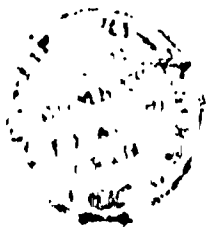
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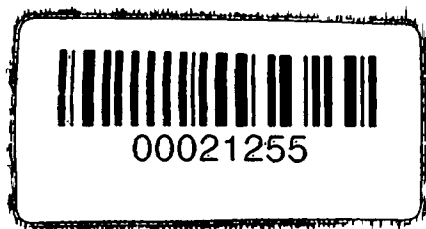
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ACCOUNT  
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THOMAS REID, D. D.

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SECTION I.

*From Dr REID's Birth till the date of his  
latest Publication.*

THE life of which I am now to present to the Royal Society a short account, although it fixes an æra in the history of modern philosophy, was uncommonly barren of those incidents which furnish materials for biography;—strenuously

A

ously devoted to truth, to virtue, and to the best interests of mankind; but spent in the obscurity of a learned retirement, remote from the pursuits of ambition, and with little solicitude about literary fame. After the agitation, however, of the political convulsions which Europe has witnessed for a course of years, the simple record of such a life may derive an interest even from its uniformity; and when contrasted with the events of the passing scene, may lead the thoughts to some views of human nature, on which it is not ungrateful to repose.

THOMAS REID, D. D. late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, was born on the 26th of April 1710, at Strachan in Kincardineshire, a country parish situated about twenty miles from Aberdeen, on the north side of the Grampian Mountains.

His

His father, the Reverend LEWIS REID, was minister of this parish for fifty years. —He was a clergyman, according to his son's account of him, respected by all who knew him, for his piety, prudence, and benevolence; inheriting from his ancestors, (most of whom, from the time of the Protestant establishment, had been ministers of the church of Scotland) that purity and simplicity of manners which became his station; and a love of letters, which, without attracting the notice of the world, amused his leisure, and dignified his retirement,

For some generations before his time, a propensity to literature, and to the learned professions,—a propensity which, when it has once become characteristical of a race, is peculiarly apt to be propagated by the influence of early associations and habits,—may be traced in several

veral individuals among his kindred. One of his ancestors, JAMES REID, was the first minister of Banchory-Ternan after the Reformation ; and transmitted to four sons a predilection for those studious habits which formed his own ; happiness. He was himself a younger son of Mr REID of Pitfoddels, a gentleman of a very ancient and respectable family in the county of Aberdeen.

JAMES REID, was succeeded as minister of Banchory by his son ROBERT.— Another son, THOMAS, rose to considerable distinction both as a philosopher and a poet ; and seems to have wanted neither ability nor inclination to turn his attainments to the best advantage. After travelling over Europe, and maintaining, as was the custom of his age, public disputations in several universities, he collected into a volume, the theses and dissertations

ertations which had been the subjects of his literary contests ; and also published some Latin poems, which may be found in the collection entitled *Delitiae Poetarum Scotorum*. On his return to his native country, he fixed his residence in London, where he was appointed secretary in the Greek and Latin tongues to King JAMES the First of England, and lived in habits of intimacy with some of the most distinguished characters of that period.—Little more, I believe, is known of THOMAS REID's history, excepting that he bequeathed to the Marischal College of Aberdeen, a curious collection of books and manuscripts, with a fund for establishing a salary to a librarian.

ALEXANDER REID, the third son, was physician to King CHARLES the First, and published several books on surgery and medicine. The fortune he acquired  
in

in the course of his practice was considerable, and enabled him (beside many legacies to his relations and friends) to leave various lasting and honourable memorials, both of his benevolence, and of his attachment to letters.

A fourth son, whose name was ADAM, translated into English, BUCHANAN's History of Scotland. Of this translation, which was never published, there is a manuscript copy in the possession of the University of Glasgow.

A grandson of ROBERT, the eldest of these sons, was the third minister of Ban-chory after the Reformation, and was great-grandfather of THOMAS REID, the subject of this memoir \*.

The particulars hitherto mentioned, are  
stated

\* NOTE A.

flated on the authority of some short memorandums written by Dr REID a few weeks before his death. In consequence of a suggestion of his friend Dr GREGORY, he had resolved to amuse himself with collecting such facts as his papers or memory could supply, with respect to his life, and the progress of his studies; but, unfortunately, before he had fairly entered on the task, his design was interrupted by his last illness. If he had lived to complete it, I might have entertained hopes of presenting to the Public some details with respect to the history of his opinions and speculations on those important subjects to which he dedicated his talents;—the most interesting of all articles in the biography of a philosopher, and of which, it is to be lamented, that so few authentic records are to be found in the annals of letters. All the information, however, which I have

derived

derived from these notes, is exhausted in the foregoing pages ; and I must content myself, in the continuation of my narrative, with those indirect aids which tradition, and the recollection of a few old acquaintance, afford ; added to what I myself have learned from Dr REID'S conversation, or collected from a careful perusal of his writings. †

His mother, MARGARET GREGORY, was a daughter of DAVID GREGORY, Esq. of Kinnairdie, in Banffshire ; elder brother of JAMES GREGORY, the inventor of the reflecting telescope, and the antagonist of HUYGHENS. She was one of twenty-nine children ; the most remarkable of whom was DAVID GREGORY, Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, and an intimate friend of Sir ISAAC NEWTON. Two of her younger brothers were at the same time Professors  
of

of Mathematics; the one at St Andrew's, the other at Edinburgh; and were the first persons who taught the NEWTONIAN philosophy in our northern universities. The hereditary worth and genius which have so long distinguished, and which still distinguish, the descendants of this memorable family, are well known to all who have turned their attention to Scottish biography; but it is not known so generally, that in the female line, the same characteristical endowments have been conspicuous in various instances; and that to the other monuments which illustrate the race of the GREGORIES, is to be added *the Philosophy of REID.*

With respect to the earlier part of Dr REID's life, all that I have been able to learn, amounts to this, That, after two years spent at the parish-school of Kincardine,

cardine, he was sent to Aberdeen, where he had the advantage of prosecuting his classical studies under an able and diligent teacher ; that, about the age of twelve or thirteen, he was entered as a student in Marischal College ; and that his master in philosophy, for three years, was Dr GEORGE TURNBULL, who afterwards attracted some degree of notice as an author ; particularly, by a book, entitled, *Principles of Moral Philosophy*, and by a voluminous treatise (long ago forgotten) on *Ancient Painting* \*. The sessions of the College were, at that time, very short, and the education, (according to Dr REID's own account) slight and superficial.

It does not appear from the information which I have received, that he gave any early indications of future eminence.

His

\* NOTE B.

His industry, however, and modesty, were conspicuous from his childhood ; and it was foretold of him, by the parish-school-master, who initiated him in the first principles of learning, “ That he would “ turn out to be a man of good and well-“ wearing parts ;” a prediction which, although it implied no flattering hopes of those more brilliant endowments which are commonly regarded as the constituents of genius, touched, not unhappily, on that capacity of “ patient thought ” which contributed so powerfully to the success of his philosophical researches\*.

His residence at the University was prolonged beyond the usual term, in consequence of his appointment to the office  
of

\* “ If I have done the Public any service, it is due  
“ to nothing but industry and patient thought.”

SIR ISAAC NEWTON'S *First Letter* to DR BENTLEY.

of Librarian, which had been endowed by one of his ancestors about a century before. The situation was acceptable to him, as it afforded an opportunity of indulging his passion for study, and united the charms of a learned society, with the quiet of an academical retreat.

During this period, he formed an intimacy with JOHN STEWART, afterwards Professor of Mathematics in Marischal College, and author of a Commentary on NEWTON'S Quadrature of Curves. His predilection for mathematical pursuits, was confirmed and strengthened by this connection. I have often heard him mention it with much pleasure, while he recollected the ardour with which they both prosecuted these fascinating studies, and the lights which they imparted mutually to each other in their first perusal of the *Principia*, at a time when a knowledge of  
the

the NEWTONIAN discoveries was to be acquired only in the writings of their illustrious author.

In 1736, Dr REID resigned his office of librarian, and accompanied Mr STEWART on an excursion to England. They visited together London, Oxford, and Cambridge, and were introduced to the acquaintance of many persons of the first literary eminence. His relation to Dr DAVID GREGORY procured him a ready access to MARTIN FOLKES, whose house concentrated the most interesting objects which the metropolis had to offer to his curiosity. At Cambridge he saw Dr BENTLEY, who delighted him with his learning, and amused him with his vanity ; and enjoyed repeatedly the conversation of the blind mathematician, SAUNDERSON ; a phenomenon in the history of the human mind, to which he has referred

ferred more than once, in his philosophical speculations.

With the learned and amiable man who was his companion on this journey, he maintained an uninterrupted friendship till 1766, when Mr STEWART died of a malignant fever. His death was accompanied with circumstances deeply afflicting to Dr REID's sensibility; the same disorder proving fatal to his wife and daughter, both of whom were buried with him in one grave.

In 1737, Dr REID was presented, by the King's College of Aberdeen, to the living of New-Machar in the same county; but the circumstances in which he entered on his preferment were far from auspicious. The intemperate zeal of one of his predecessors, and an aversion to the law of patronage, had so inflamed the  
minds

minds of his parishioners against him, that, in the first discharge of his clerical functions, he had not only to encounter the most violent opposition, but was exposed to personal danger. His unwearied attention, however, to the duties of his office, the mildness and forbearance of his temper, and the active spirit of his humanity, soon overcame all these prejudices; and, not many years afterwards, when he was called to a different situation, the same persons who had suffered themselves to be so far misled, as to take a share in the outrages against him, followed him on his departure, with their blessings and tears. .

Dr REID's popularity at New-Machar, (as I am informed by the respectable clergyman\* who now holds that living), increased greatly after his marriage, in  
1740,

\* The Rev. WILLIAM STRONACH

1740, with ELIZABETH, daughter of his uncle, Dr GEORGE REID, physician in London. The accommodating manners of this excellent woman, and her good offices among the sick and necessitous, are still remembered with gratitude, and so endeared the family to the neighbourhood, that its removal was regarded as a general misfortune. The simple and affecting language in which some old men expressed themselves on this subject, in conversing with the present minister, deserves to be recorded. “ We fought *against* Dr REID, when he came, and would have fought *for* him when he went away.”

In some notes relative to the earlier part of his history, which have been kindly communicated to me by the Rev. Mr DAVIDSON, minister of Rayne, it is mentioned as a proof of his uncommon  
modesty

modesty and diffidence, that long after he became minister of New-Machar, he was accustomed, from a distrust in his own powers, to preach the sermons of Dr TILLOTSON, and of Dr EVANS. I have heard also, through other channels, that, in his youth, he had cultivated the art of composition, with less assiduity than might have been expected from his studious habits. The fact is curious, when contrasted with that ease, perspicuity, and purity of style, which he afterwards attained. From some information, however, which has been lately transmitted to me by one of his nearest relations, I have reason to believe, that the number of original discourses which he wrote, while a country clergyman, was not inconsiderable.

The satisfaction of his own mind was probably, in this stage of his inquiries, a more powerful incentive to his philosophical

phical speculations, than the hope of being able to instruct the world as an author. But whatever his views were, one thing is certain, that during his residence at New-Machar, the greater part of his time was spent in the most intense study; more particularly in a careful examination of the laws of external perception, and of the other principles which form the groundwork of human knowledge. His chief relaxations were gardening and botany, to both of which pursuits he retained his attachment even in old age.

A paper which he published in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, for the year 1748, affords some light with respect to the progress of his studies at the time when it was written. It is entitled, *An Essay on Quantity, occasioned by reading a Treatise, in which Simple and Compound Ratios are applied to Virtue*  
and

*and Merit*; and shews plainly, by its contents, that, although he had not entirely relinquished the favourite researches of his youth, he was beginning to direct his thoughts to other objects.

The treatise alluded to in the title of this paper, was manifestly the “ Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of *Beauty* and *Virtue*,” by Dr HUTCHESON of Glasgow. According to this very ingenious writer, the *moment* of public good produced by an individual, depending partly on his *benevolence*, and partly on his *ability*, the relation between these different moral ideas may be expressed in the technical form of algebraists, by saying that the first is in the compound proportion of the two others. Hence Dr HUTCHESON infers, that “ *the benevolence* of an agent, (which in this system is synonymous with his *moral merit*), is proportional

“ tional to a fraction, having the moment  
“ of good for the numerator, and the abi-  
“ lity of the agent for the denominator.”

Various other examples of a similar nature occur in the same work; and are stated with a gravity not altogether worthy of the author. It is probable that they were intended merely as *illustrations* of his general reasonings, not as *media* of investigation for the discovery of new conclusions; but they appeared to Dr REID to be an innovation which it was of importance to resist, on account of the tendency it might have (by confounding the evidence of different branches of science) to retard the progress of knowledge. The very high reputation which Dr HUTCHESON then possessed in the Universities of Scotland, added to the recent attempts of PITCAIRN and CHEYNE to apply mathematical reasoning to medicine, would bestow, it is likely, an interest on  
Dr

Dr REID's Essay at the time of its publication, which it can scarcely be expected to possess at present. Many of the observations, however, which it contains, are acute and original; and all of them are expressed with that clearness and precision, so conspicuous in his subsequent compositions. The circumstance which renders a subject susceptible of mathematical consideration, is accurately stated; and the proper province of that science defined in such a manner, as sufficiently to expose the absurdity of those abuses of its technical phraseology which were at that time prevalent. From some passages in it, there is, I think, ground for concluding, that the Author's metaphysical reading had not been very extensive previous to this period. The enumeration, in particular, which he has given of the different kinds of *proper quantity*, affords a proof, that he was not acquainted with the refined yet  
found

found disquisitions concerning the nature of *number* and of *proportion*, which had appeared almost a century before, in the *Mathematical Lectures* of Dr BARROW ; nor with the remarks on the same subject introduced by Dr CLARKE in one of his controversial letters addressed to LEIBNITZ.

In the same paper, Dr REID takes occasion to offer some reflections on the dispute between the *Newtonians* and *Leibnitzians* concerning the measure of forces. The fundamental idea on which these reflections proceed, is just and important ; and it leads to the correction of an error, committed very generally by the partizans of both opinions ; that, of mistaking a question concerning the comparative advantages of two *definitions*, for a difference of statement with respect to a *physical fact*. It must, I think, be acknowledged, at the same time, that the whole merits of the

Controversy

controversy are not here exhausted ; and that the honour of placing this very subtle and abstruse question in a point of view calculated to reconcile completely the contending parties, was reserved for M. D'ALEMBERT. To have fallen short of the success which attended the inquiries of that eminent man, on a subject so congenial to his favourite habits of study, will not reflect any discredit on the powers of Dr REID's mind, in the judgment of those who are at all acquainted with the history of this celebrated discussion.

In 1752, the Professors of *King's College* elected Dr REID Professor of Philosophy, in testimony of the high opinion they had formed of his learning and abilities. Of the particular plan which he followed in his academical lectures, while he held this office, I have not been able to obtain any satisfactory account ; but the department

ment of science which was assigned to him by the general system of education in that university, was abundantly extensive; comprehending Mathematics and Physics as well as Logic and Ethics." A similar system was pursued formerly in the other universities of Scotland; the same professor then conducting his pupils through all those branches of knowledge which are now appropriated to different teachers. And where he happened fortunately to possess those various accomplishments which distinguished Dr REID in so remarkable a degree, it cannot be doubted that the unity and comprehensiveness of method, of which such academical courses admitted, must necessarily have possessed important advantages over that more minute subdivision of literary labour which has since been introduced. But as public establishments ought to adapt themselves to what is ordinary, rather than to what is

is

is possible, it is not surprising, that experience should have gradually suggested an arrangement more suitable to the narrow limits which commonly circumscribe human genius.

Soon after Dr REID's removal to Aberdeen, he projected (in conjunction with his friend Dr JOHN GREGORY) a literary society, which subsisted for many years, and which seems to have had the happiest effects in awakening and directing that spirit of philosophical research, which has since reflected so much lustre on the north of Scotland. The meetings of this society were held weekly ; and afforded the members, (beside the advantages to be derived from a mutual communication of their sentiments on the common objects of their pursuit), an opportunity of subjecting their intended publications to the test of friendly criticism. The number of valuable  
works

works which issued nearly about the same time, from individuals connected with this institution, more particularly the writings of REID, GREGORY, CAMPBELL, BEATTIE and GERARD, furnish the best panegyric on the enlightened views of those under whose direction it was originally formed.

Among these works, the most original and profound was unquestionably the *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, published by Dr REID in 1764. The plan appears to have been conceived, and the subject deeply meditated, by the author long before ; but it is doubtful, whether his modesty would have ever permitted him to present to the world the fruits of his solitary studies, without the encouragement which he received from the general acquiescence of his associates, in the most  
important

important conclusions to which he had been led.

From a passage in the dedication, it would seem, that the speculations which terminated in these conclusions had commenced as early as the year 1739; at which period the publication of Mr HUME's *Treatise of Human Nature* induced him, for the first time, (as he himself informs us), "to call in question the principles commonly received with regard to the human understanding." In his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, he acknowledges, that, in his youth, he had, without examination, admitted the established opinions on which Mr HUME's system of scepticism was raised; and that it was the consequences which these opinions seemed to involve, which roused his suspicions concerning their truth. "I  
" may presume" (says he) "to treat my

“ own sentiments, I once believed *the doctrine of Ideas* so firmly, as to embrace the whole of BERKELEY’s system along with it ; till finding other consequences to follow from it, which gave me more uneasiness than the want of a material world, it came into my mind more than forty years ago, to put the question, What evidence have I for this doctrine, that all the objects of my knowledge are ideas in my own mind ? From that time to the present, I have been candidly and impartially, as I think, seeking for the evidence of this principle ; but can find none, excepting the authority of philosophers.”

In following the train of Dr REID’s researches, this last extract merits attention, as it contains an explicit avowal, on his own part, that, at one period of his life, he had been led, by BERKELEY’s reasonings;

ings, to abandon the belief of the existence of *matter*. The avowal does honour to his candour, and the fact reflects no discredit on his sagacity. The truth is, that this article of the Berkleian system, however contrary to the conclusions of a sounder philosophy, was the error of no common mind. Considered in contrast with that theory of materialism, which the excellent Author was anxious to supplant, it possessed important advantages, not only in its tendency, but in its scientific consistency ; and it afforded a proof, wherever it met with a favourable reception, of an understanding superior to those casual associations, which, in the apprehensions of most men, blend indissolubly the phenomena of thought with the objects of external perception. It is recorded as a saying of M. T<sup>U</sup>RGOT, (whose philosophical opinions in some important points approached very nearly to those of

Dr

Dr REID\*), That “ he who had never  
“ doubted of the existence of matter,  
“ might be assured he had no turn for  
“ metaphysical disquisitions.”

...

As the refutation of Mr HUME's sceptical theory was the great and professed object of Dr REID's *Inquiry*, he was anxious, before taking the field as a controversial writer, to guard against the danger of misapprehending or misrepresenting the meaning of his adversary, by submitting his reasonings to Mr HUME's private examination. With this view, he availed himself of the good offices of Dr BLAIR, with whom both he and Mr HUME had long lived in habits of friendship. The communications which he at first transmitted, consisted only of detached parts of the work ; and appear evidently, from

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\* See, in particular, the article *Existence* in the *Encyclopædie*.

a correspondence which I have perused, to have conveyed a very imperfect idea of his general system. In one of Mr HUME's letters to Dr BLAIR, he betrays some want of his usual good humour, in looking forward to his new antagonist. "I wish," says he, "that the Parsons would confine themselves to their old occupation of worrying one another, and leave philosophers to argue with temper, moderation, and good manners." After Mr HUME, however, had read the manuscript, he addressed himself directly to the Author, in terms so candid and liberal, that it would be unjust to his memory to withhold from the Public so pleasing a memorial of his character.

"By Dr BLAIR's means, I have been favoured with the perusal of your performance, which I have read with great pleasure and attention. It is certainly  
"very

“ very rare, that a piece so deeply philo-  
“ sophical is wrote with so much spirit,  
“ and affords so much entertainment to  
“ the reader; though I must still regret  
“ the disadvantages under which I read it,  
“ as I never had the whole performance  
“ at once before me, and could not be  
“ able fully to compare one part with  
“ another. To this reason, chiefly, I as-  
“ cribe some obscurities, which, in spite  
“ of your short analysis or abstract, still  
“ seem to hang over your system. For I  
“ must do you the justice to own, that  
“ when I enter into your ideas, no man  
“ appears to express himself with greater  
“ perspicuity than you do; a talent which,  
“ above all others, is requisite in that spe-  
“ cies of literature which you have culti-  
“ vated. There are some objections which  
“ I would willingly propose to the chapter,  
“ *Of Sight*, did I not suspect that they pro-  
“ ceed from my not sufficiently under-  
“ standing

“ standing it ; and I am the more con-  
 “ firmed in this fufpicion, as Dr BLAIR  
 “ tells me, that the former objections I  
 “ made had been derived chiefly from  
 “ that caufe. I fhall therefore forbear till  
 “ the whole can be before me, and fhall  
 “ not at prefent propofe any farther diffi-  
 “ culties to your reasonings. I fhall only  
 “ fay, that if you have been able to clear  
 “ up thefe abftrufe and important fub-  
 “ jects, inftead of being mortified, I fhall  
 “ be fo vain as to pretend to a fhare of  
 “ the praife ; and fhall think, that my  
 “ errors, by having at leaft fome cohe-  
 “ rence, had led you to make a more ftrict  
 “ review of my principles, which were the  
 “ common ones, and to perceive their  
 “ futility.

“ As I was defirous to be of fome ufe  
 “ to you, I kept a watchful eye all along  
 “ over your ftyle ; but it is really fo cor-  
 C rect,

“ rect, and so good English, that I found  
“ not any thing worth the remarking.  
“ There is only one passage in this chap-  
“ ter, where you make use of the phrase  
“ *hinder to do*, instead of *hinder from doing*,  
“ which is the English one ; but I could  
“ not find the passage when I sought for  
“ it. You may judge how unexception-  
“ able the whole appeared to me, when I  
“ could remark so small a blemish. I beg  
“ my compliments to my friendly adver-  
“ saries, Dr CAMPBELL and Dr GERARD ;  
“ and also to Dr GREGORY, whom I sus-  
“ pect to be of the same disposition,  
“ though he has not openly declared him-  
“ self such.”————

Of the particular doctrines contained in Dr REID's *Inquiry*, I do not think it necessary here to attempt any abstract ; nor indeed do his speculations (conducted as they were in strict conformity to the rules

rules of inductive philosophizing) afford a subject for the same species of rapid outline, which is so useful in facilitating the study of a merely hypothetical theory. Their great object was to record and to classify the phenomena which the operations of the human mind present to those who reflect carefully on the subjects of their consciousness; and of such a history, it is manifest, that no abridgment could be offered with advantage. Some reflections on the peculiar plan adopted by the Author, and on the general scope of his researches in this department of science, will afterwards find a more convenient place, when I shall have finished my account of his subsequent publications.

The idea of prosecuting the study of the human mind, on a plan analogous to that which had been so successfully adopted in physics by the followers of Lord BACON,

BACON, if not first conceived by Dr REID, was at least first carried successfully into execution in his writings. An attempt had long before been announced by Mr HUME, in the title-page of his *Treatise of Human Nature*, to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects; and some admirable remarks are made in the introduction to that work, on the errors into which his predecessors had been betrayed by the spirit of hypothesis; and yet it is now very generally admitted, that the whole of his own system rests on a principle for which there is no evidence but the authority of philosophers; and it is certain, that in no part of it, has he aimed to investigate by a systematical analysis, those general principles of our constitution which can alone afford a synthetical explanation of its complicated phenomena.

I have often been disposed to think, that Mr HUME's inattention to those rules of philosophizing which it was his professed intention to exemplify, was owing in part to some indistinctness in his notions concerning their import. It does not appear, that, in the earlier part of his studies, he had paid much attention to the models of investigation exhibited in the writings of NEWTON and of his successors: and that he was by no means aware of the extraordinary merits of BACON as a philosopher, nor of the influence which his writings have had on the subsequent progress of physical discovery, is demonstrated by the cold and qualified encomium which is bestowed on his genius, in one of the most elaborate passages of the *History of England*.

In these respects Dr REID possessed important advantages; familiarized, from  
his

his early years, to those experimental inquiries, which, in the course of the two last centuries, have exalted Natural Philosophy to the dignity of a science ; and determined strongly, by the peculiar bent of his genius, to connect every step in the progress of discovery with the history of the human mind. The influence of the general views opened in the *Novum Organon*, may be traced in almost every page of his writings ; and, indeed, the circumstance by which these are so strongly and characteristically distinguished, is, that they exhibit the first systematical attempt to exemplify, in the study of human nature, the same plan of investigation which conducted NEWTON to the properties of light, and to the law of gravitation. It is from a steady adherence to this plan, and not from the superiority of his inventive powers, that he claims to himself any merit as a philosopher ; and he seems even  
willing

willing (with a modesty approaching to a fault) to abandon the praise of what is commonly called *genius*, to the authors of the systems which he was anxious to refute. "It is genius," he observes in one passage, "and not the want of it, that adulterates philosophy, and fills it with error and false theory. A creative imagination disdains the mean offices of digging for a foundation, of removing rubbish, and carrying materials: leaving these servile employments to the drudges in science, it plans a design, and raises a fabric. Invention supplies materials where they are wanting, and fancy adds colouring, and every befitting ornament. The work pleases the eye, and wants nothing but solidity and a good foundation. It seems even to vie with the works of nature, till some succeeding architect blows it into ruins, and  
 " builds

“ builds as goodly a fabric of his own in  
“ its place.”

“ Success in an inquiry of this kind,”  
he observes farther, “ it is not in human  
“ power to command ; but perhaps it is  
“ possible, by caution and humility, to  
“ avoid error and delusion. The laby-  
“ rinth may be too intricate, and the  
“ thread too fine, to be traced through all  
“ its windings ; but, if we stop where we  
“ can trace it no farther, and secure the  
“ ground we have gained, there is no harm  
“ done ; a quicker eye may in time trace  
“ it farther.”

The unassuming language with which  
Dr REID endeavours to remove the preju-  
dices naturally excited by a new attempt  
to philosophize on so unpromising, and  
hitherto so ungrateful a subject, recalls to  
our recollection those passages in which  
Lord

Lord BACON—filled as his own imagination was with the future grandeur of the fabric founded by his hand—bespeaks the indulgence of his readers, for an enterprize apparently so hopeless and presumptuous. The apology he offers for himself, when compared with the height to which the structure of physical knowledge has since attained, may perhaps have some effect in attracting a more general attention to pursuits still more immediately interesting to mankind ; and, at any rate, it forms the best comment on the prophetic suggestions in which Dr REID occasionally indulges himself concerning the future progress of moral speculation.

“ Si homines per tanta annorum spatia  
 “ viam veram inveniendi et colendi sci-  
 “ entias tenuissent, nec tamen ulterius pro-  
 “ gredi potuissent, audax procul dubio et  
 “ temeraria foret opinio, posse rem in ul-  
 “ terius

“ terius provehi. Quod si in *via* ipsa er-  
 “ ratum fit, atque hominum opera in iis  
 “ consumpta in quibus minime oportebat,  
 “ sequitur ex eo, non in rebus ipsis diffi-  
 “ cultatem oriri, quæ potestatis nostræ non  
 “ sunt ; sed in intellectu humano, ejusque  
 “ usu et applicatione, quæ res remedium et  
 “ medicinam suscipit\*.” ——— “ De nobis  
 “ ipsis silemus : de re autem quæ agitur,  
 “ petimus ; Ut homines eam non opinio-  
 “ nem, sed opus esse cogitent ; ac pro certo  
 “ habeant, non sectæ nos alicujus, aut pla-  
 “ citi, sed utilitatis et amplitudinis hu-  
 “ manæ fundamenta moliri. Præterea,  
 “ ut bene sperent ; neque Instaurationem  
 “ nostram ut quiddam infinitum et ultra  
 “ mortale fingant, et animo concipiant ;  
 “ quum revera sit infiniti erroris finis et  
 “ terminus legitimus †.”

The impression produced on the minds  
 of

\* N. Y. Org. 94.

† Instaut. Mag.—Præfat.

of speculative men, by the publication of Dr REID's *Inquiry*, was fully as great as could be expected from the nature of his undertaking. It was a work neither addressed to the multitude, nor level to their comprehension ; and the freedom with which it canvassed opinions sanctioned by the highest authorities, was ill calculated to conciliate the favour of the learned. A few, however, habituated, like the author, to the analytical researches of the Newtonian school, soon perceived the extent of his views, and recognised in his pages the genuine spirit and language of inductive investigation. Among the members of this university, Mr FERGUSON was the first to applaud Dr REID's success ; warmly recommending to his pupils a steady prosecution of the same plan, as the only effectual method of ascertaining the general principles of the human frame : and illustrating happily, by his own profound  
and

and eloquent disquisitions, the application of such studies, to the conduct of the understanding, and to the great concerns of life. I recollect, too, when I attended (about the year 1771) the Lectures of the late Mr RUSSELL, to have heard high encomiums on the Philosophy of REID, in the course of those comprehensive discussions concerning the objects and the rules of experimental science, with which he so agreeably diversified the particular doctrines of physics.—Nor must I omit this opportunity of paying a tribute to the memory of my old friend Mr STEVENSON, then Professor of Logic ; whose candid mind, at the age of seventy, gave a welcome reception to a system subversive of the theories which he had taught for forty years ; and whose zeal for the advancement of knowledge prompted him, when his career was almost finished, to undertake the laborious task of new-modelling that useful compilation

compilation of elementary instruction, to which a singular diffidence of his own powers limited his literary exertions.

It is with no common feelings of respect and of gratitude, that I now recal the names of those to whom I owe my first attachment to these studies, and the happiness of a liberal occupation superior to the more aspiring aims of a servile ambition.

From the University of Glasgow, Dr REID's *Inquiry* received a still more substantial testimony of approbation; the author having been invited, in 1763, by that learned body, to the professorship of Moral Philosophy, then vacant by the resignation of Mr SMITH. The preferment was in many respects advantageous; affording an income considerably greater than he enjoyed at Aberdeen; and enabling

bling him to concentrate to his favourite objects, that attention which had been hitherto distracted by the miscellaneous nature of his academical engagements. It was not, however, without reluctance, that he consented to tear himself from a spot where he had so long been fastening his roots; and, much as he loved the society in which he passed the remainder of his days, I am doubtful if, in his mind, it compensated the sacrifice of earlier habits and connections.

Abstracting from the charm of local attachment, the University of Glasgow, at the time when Dr REID was adopted as one of its members, presented strong attractions to reconcile him to his change of situation. ROBERT SIMSON, the great restorer of ancient geometry, was still alive; and, although far advanced in years, preserved unimpaired his ardour  
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in study, his relish for social relaxation, and his amusing singularities of humour. Dr MOOR combined with a gaiety and a levity foreign to this climate, the profound attainments of a scholar and of a mathematician. In Dr BLACK, to whose fortunate genius a new world of science had just opened, REID acknowledged an instructor and a guide; and met a simplicity of manners congenial to his own. The WILSONS (both father and son) were formed to attach his heart by the similarity of their scientific pursuits, and an entire sympathy with his views and sentiments. Nor was he less delighted with the good-humoured opposition which his opinions never failed to encounter in the acuteness of MILLAR,—then in the vigour of youthful genius, and warm from the lessons of a different school. Dr LEECHMAN, the friend and biographer of HUTCHESON, was the official head of the College;

College ; and added the weight of a venerable name to the reputation of a community, which he had once adorned in a more active station \*.

Animated by the zeal of such associates, and by the busy scenes which his new residence presented in every department of useful industry, Dr REID entered on his functions at Glasgow, with an ardour not common at the period of life, which he had now attained. His researches concerning the human mind, and the principles of morals, which had occupied but an inconsiderable space in the wide circle of science, allotted to him by his former office, were extended and methodised in a course, which employed five hours every week, during six months of the year : the example of his illustrious predecessor, and the prevailing topics of conversation  
around

\* NOTE C.

around him, occasionally turned his thoughts to commercial politics, and produced some ingenious essays on different questions connected with trade, which were communicated to a private society of his academical friends: his early passion for the mathematical sciences was revived by the conversation of SIMSON, MOOR, and the WILSONS; and, at the age of fifty-five, he attended the lectures of BLACK, with a juvenile curiosity and enthusiasm.

As the substance of Dr REID'S lectures at Glasgow (at least of that part of them which was most important and original) has been since given to the public in a more improved form, it is unnecessary for me to enlarge on the plan which he followed in the discharge of his official duties. I shall therefore only observe, that beside his Speculations on the Intellectual and

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Active Powers of Man, and a System of Practical Ethics, his course comprehended some general views with respect to Natural Jurisprudence, and the fundamental principles of Politics. A few lectures on Rhetoric, which were read, at a separate hour, to a more advanced class of students, formed a voluntary addition to the appropriate functions of his office, to which, it is probable, he was prompted rather by a wish to supply what was then a deficiency in the established course of education, than by any predilection for a branch of study so foreign to his ordinary pursuits.

The merits of Dr REID, as a public teacher, were derived chiefly from that rich fund of original and instructive philosophy which is to be found in his writings; and from his unwearied assiduity in inculcating principles which he conceived to be of essential importance to human

human happiness. In his elocution and mode of instruction, there was nothing peculiarly attractive. He seldom, if ever, indulged himself in the warmth of extempore discourse; nor was his manner of reading calculated to increase the effect of what he had committed to writing. Such, however, was the simplicity and perspicuity of his style; such the gravity and authority of his character; and such the general interest of his young hearers in the doctrines which he taught, that by the numerous audiences to which his instructions were addressed, he was heard uniformly with the most silent and respectful attention. On this subject, I speak from personal knowledge; having had the good fortune, during a considerable part of the winter of 1772, to be one of his pupils.

It does not appear to me, from what I am now able to recollect of the order which  
 he

he observed in treating the different parts of his subject, that he had laid much stress on systematical arrangement. It is probable, that he availed himself of whatever materials his private inquiries afforded, for his academical compositions ; without aiming at the merit of combining them into a *whole*, by a comprehensive and regular design ;—an undertaking, to which, if I am not mistaken, the established forms of his university, consecrated by long custom, would have presented some obstacles. One thing is certain, that neither he nor his immediate predecessor ever published any general *prospectus* of their respective plans ; nor any *heads* or *outlines* to assist their students in tracing the trains of thought which suggested their various transitions.

The interest, however, excited by such details as these, even if it were in my  
power

power to render them more full and satisfactory, must necessarily be temporary and local; and I therefore hasten to observations of a more general nature, on the distinguishing characteristics of Dr REID's philosophical genius, and on the spirit and scope of those researches which he has bequeathed to posterity, concerning the phenomena and laws of the human mind. In mentioning his first performance on this subject, I have already anticipated a few remarks which are equally applicable to his subsequent publications; but the hints then suggested were too slight, to place in so strong a light as I could wish, the peculiarities of that mode of investigation, which it was the great object of his writings to recommend and to exemplify. His own anxiety, to neglect nothing that might contribute to its farther illustration, induced him, while his health and faculties were yet entire, to withdraw from his public

public labours; and to devote himself wholly to a task of more extensive and permanent utility. It was in the year 1781 that he carried this design into execution, at a period of life (for he was then upwards of seventy) when the infirmities of age might be supposed to account sufficiently for his retreat; but when, in fact, neither the vigour of his mind nor of his body seemed to have suffered any injury from time. The works which he published not many years afterwards, afford a sufficient proof of the assiduity with which he had availed himself of his literary leisure; his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* appearing in 1785; and those on the *Active Powers* in 1788.

As these two performances are, both of them, parts of one great work, to which his *Inquiry into the Human Mind* may be regarded as the Introduction, I have reserved

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ed for this place whatever critical reflections I have to offer on his merits as an Author ; conceiving that they would be more likely to produce their intended effect, when presented at once in a connected form, than if interspersed, according to a chronological order, with the details of a biographical narrative.

SEC.

## SECTION SECOND.

*Observations on the Spirit and Scope of Dr  
REID's Philosophy.*

I HAVE already observed, that the distinguishing feature of Dr REID's Philosophy, is the systematical steadiness, with which he has adhered in his inquiries, to that plan of investigation which is delineated in the *Novum Organon*, and which has been so happily exemplified in physics by Sir ISAAC NEWTON and his followers. To recommend this plan as the only effectual method of enlarging our knowledge of nature, was the favourite aim of all his studies, and a topic on which he thought he could not enlarge too much, in conversing  
or

or corresponding with his younger friends. In a letter to Dr GREGORY, which I have perused, he particularly congratulates him, upon his acquaintance with Lord BACON'S works ; adding, " I am very apt to measure a man's understanding, by the opinion he entertains of that author."

It were perhaps to be wished, that he had taken a little more pains to illustrate the fundamental rules of that logic, the value of which he estimated so highly ; more especially, to point out the modifications with which it is applicable to the science of mind. Many important hints, indeed, connected with this subject, may be collected from different parts of his writings ; but I am inclined to think, that a more ample discussion of it in a preliminary dissertation, might have thrown light on the scope of many of his researches, and obviated some of the most plausible

plausible objections which have been stated to his conclusions.

It is not, however, my intention at present, to attempt to supply a *defideratum* of so great a magnitude;—an undertaking which, I trust, will find a more convenient place, in the farther prosecution of those speculations with respect to the Intellectual Powers which I have already submitted to the public. The detached remarks which follow, are offered merely as a supplement to what I have stated concerning the nature and object of this branch of study, in the Introduction to the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*.

The influence of BACON's genius on the subsequent progress of physical discovery, has been seldom fairly appreciated; by some writers almost entirely overlooked; and by others considered as the sole cause

cause of the reformation in science which has since taken place. Of these two extremes, the latter certainly is the least wide of the truth ; for in the whole history of letters, no other individual can be mentioned, whose exertions have had so indisputable an effect in forwarding the intellectual progress of mankind. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged, that before the æra when *BACON* appeared, various philosophers in different parts of Europe had struck into the right path ; and it may perhaps be doubted, whether any one important rule with respect to the true method of investigation be contained in his works, of which no hint can be traced in those of his predecessors. His great merit lay in concentrating their feeble and scattered lights ;—fixing the attention of philosophers on the distinguishing characteristics of true and of false science, by a felicity of illustration peculiar to himself, seconded

conded by the commanding powers of a bold and figurative eloquence. The method of investigation which he recommended had been previously followed in every instance, in which any solid discovery had been made with respect to the laws of nature ; but it had been followed accidentally, and without any regular, pre-conceived design ; and it was reserved for him to reduce to rule and method what others had effected, either fortuitously, or from some momentary glimpse of the truth. It is justly observed by Dr REID, that “ the man who first discovered that  
“ cold freezes water, and that heat turns  
“ it into vapour, proceeded on the same  
“ general principle by which NEWTON  
“ discovered the law of gravitation and  
“ the properties of light. His *Regule Philosophandi* are maxims of common sense,  
“ and are practised every day in common  
“ life ; and he who philosophizes by other  
“ rules,

“ rules, either concerning the material  
 “ system or concerning the mind, mis-  
 “ takes his aim.”

These remarks are not intended to detract from the just glory of BACON; for they apply to all those, without exception, who have systematized the principles of any of the arts. Indeed, they apply less forcibly to Him, than to any other philosopher whose studies have been directed to objects analagous to his; inasmuch as we know of no art, of which the rules have been reduced successfully into a didactic form, when the art itself was as much in infancy as experimental philosophy was when BACON wrote.—Nor must it be supposed, that the utility was small of thus attempting to systematize the accidental processes of unenlightened ingenuity, and to give to the noblest exertions of Human Reason, the same advantages of Scientific Method,

Method, which have contributed so much to ensure the success of genius in pursuits of inferior importance. The very philosophical motto which REYNOLDS has so happily prefixed to his *Academical Discourses*, admits, on this occasion, of a still more appropriate application : “ Omnia  
 “ fere quæ præceptis continentur ab in-  
 “ geniosis hominibus fiunt ; sed casu quo-  
 “ dam magis quam scientia. Ideoque  
 “ doctrina et animadversio adhibenda est,  
 “ ut ea quæ interdum sine ratione nobis  
 “ occurrunt, semper in nostra potestate  
 “ sint ; et quoties res postulaverit, a nobis  
 “ ex præparato adhibeantur.”

But although a few superior minds seem to have been in some measure predisposed for that revolution in science, which BACON contributed so powerfully to accomplish, the case was very different with the great majority of those who were then  
 most .

most distinguished for learning and talents. His views were plainly too advanced for the age in which he lived ; and, that he was sensible of this himself, appears from those remarkable passages, in which he styles himself, “ The servant of posterity,” and “ bequeaths his fame to future times.” —HOBBS, who in his early youth, had enjoyed his friendship, speaks, a considerable time after BACON’s death, of experimental philosophy, in terms of contempt ; influenced probably, not a little, by the tendency he perceived in the inductive method of inquiry, to undermine the foundations of that fabric of scepticism which it was the great object of his labours to rear. Nay, even during the course of the last century, it has been less from BACON’s own speculations, than from the examples of sound investigation exhibited by a few eminent men, who professed to follow him as their guide, that the practical spirit of his

his

his writings has been caught by the multitude of physical Experimentalists over Europe ;—truth and good sense descending gradually, in this as in other instances, by the force of imitation and of early habit, from the higher orders of intellect to the lower. In some parts of the Continent, more especially, the circulation of BACON'S philosophical works has been surprisingly slow. It is doubtful whether DES CARTES himself ever perused them ; and as late as the year 1759, if we may credit MONTUCLA, they were very little known in France. The introductory discourse prefixed by D'ALEMBERT to the *Encyclopedie*, first recommended them, in that country, to general attention.

The change which has taken place during the two last centuries, in the plan of physical research, and the success which has so remarkably attended it, could not  
fail

fail to suggest an idea, that something analogous might probably be accomplished at a future period, with respect to the phenomena of the intellectual world. And accordingly, various hints of this kind may be traced in different authors, since the æra of NEWTON'S discoveries. A memorable instance occurs in the prediction with which that great man concludes his *Optics*;—"That if Natural Philosophy, in all its parts, by pursuing the inductive method, shall at length be perfected, the bounds of Moral Philosophy will also be enlarged." Similar remarks may be found in other publications; particularly in Mr HUME'S *Treatise of Human Nature*, where the subject is enlarged on with much ingenuity. As far, however, as I am able to judge, Dr REID was the first who conceived justly and clearly the analogy between these two different branches of human knowledge; defining with precision

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cision the distinct provinces of Observation and of Reflection, in furnishing the *data* of all our reasonings concerning Matter and Mind ; and demonstrating the necessity of a careful separation between the phenomena which they respectively exhibit, while we adhere to the same mode of philosophizing in investigating the laws of both.

That so many philosophers should have thus mislaid their aim, in prosecuting the study of the Human Mind, will appear the less surprising, when we consider, in how many difficulties, peculiar to itself, this science is involved. It is sufficient at present to mention those which arise,—from the metaphorical origin of all the words which express the intellectual phenomena ;—from the subtle and fugitive nature of the Objects of our reasonings ;—from the habits of inattention we acquire,  
in

in early life, to the subjects of our consciousness;—and from the prejudices which early impressions and associations create to warp our opinions. It must be remembered, too, that in the science of Mind (so imperfectly are its logical rules as yet understood!) we have not the same checks on the abuses of our reasoning powers, which serve to guard us against error in our other researches. In physics, a speculative mistake is abandoned, when contradicted by facts which strike the senses. In mathematics, an absurd or inconsistent conclusion is admitted as a demonstrative proof of a faulty hypothesis. But, in those inquiries which relate to the principles of human nature, the absurdities and inconsistencies to which we are led by almost all the systems hitherto proposed, instead of suggesting corrections and improvements on these systems, have too frequently had the effect of producing scepticism

ticism with respect to all of them alike. How melancholy is the confession of HUME!—"The intense view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason, has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another."

Under these discouragements to this branch of study, it affords some comfort to reflect on the great number of important facts with respect to the mind, which are scattered in the writings of Philosophers. As the subject of our inquiry here lies within our own breast, a considerable mixture of truth may be expected even in those systems which are most erroneous; not only because a number of men can scarcely be long imposed on by a hypothesis which is perfectly groundless,

groundless, concerning the objects of their own consciousness; but because it is generally by an alliance with truth and with the original principles of human nature, that prejudices and associations produce their effects. Perhaps it may even be affirmed, that our progress in this research depends less on the degree of our industry and invention, than on our sagacity and good sense in separating old discoveries from the errors which have been blended with them; and on that candid and dispassionate temper that may prevent us from being led astray by the love of novelty, or the affectation of singularity. In this respect, the science of mind possesses a very important advantage over that which relates to the laws of the material world. The former has been cultivated with more or less success in all ages and countries: the facts which serve as the basis of the latter have, with a very few exceptions,

ceptions, been collected during the course of the two last centuries. An observation similar to this is applied to systems of Ethics by Mr SMITH, in his account of the theory of MANDEVILLE; and the illustration he gives of it may be extended with equal propriety to the science of mind in general. “A system of Natural Philosophy,” he remarks, “may appear very plausible, “and be, for’a long time, very generally “received in the world, and yet have no “foundation in nature, nor any sort of resemblance to the truth. But it is otherwise with systems of Moral Philosophy. “When a traveller gives an account of “some distant country, he may impose “upon our credulity the most groundless “and absurd fictions as the most certain “matters of fact: But when a person pretends to inform us of what passes in our “neighbourhood, and of the affairs of the “very parish we live in, though here too,  
“if

“ if we are so careless as not to examine  
 “ things with our own eyes, he may de-  
 “ ceive us in many respects ; yet the great-  
 “ est falsehoods which he imposes on us  
 “ must bear some resemblance to the truth,  
 “ and must even have a considerable mix-  
 “ ture of truth in them.”

These considerations demonstrate the  
 essential importance, in this branch of  
 study, of forming, at the commencement  
 of our inquiries, just notions of the *criteria*  
 of true and false science, and of the rules  
 of philosophical investigation. They de-  
 monstrate, at the same time, that an at-  
 tention to the rules of philosophizing, as  
 they are exemplified in the physical re-  
 searches of NEWTON and his followers, al-  
 though the best of all preparations for an  
 examination of the mental phenomena, is  
 but one of the steps necessary to ensure  
 our success. On an accurate comparison  
 of

of the two subjects, it might probably appear, that after this preliminary step has been gained, the most arduous part of the process still remains. One thing is certain, that it is not from any defect in the power of ratiocination or deduction, that our speculative errors chiefly arise;—a fact of which we have a decisive proof in the facility with which most students may be taught the mathematical and physical sciences, when compared with the difficulty of leading their minds to the truth on questions of morals and politics.

The logical rules which lay the foundation of sound and useful conclusions concerning the laws of this internal world, although not altogether overlooked by Lord BACON, were plainly not the principal object of his work; and what he has written on the subject, consists chiefly of detached hints dropped casually in the course of  
other

speculations. A comprehensive  
of the sciences and arts dependent  
on the philosophy of the human mind,  
exhibiting the relations which they bear  
to each other, and to the general system  
of human knowledge, would form a na-  
tural and useful introduction to the study  
of these logical principles; but such a  
View remains still a *desideratum*, after all  
the advances made towards it by BACON  
and D'ALEMBERT. Indeed, in the pre-  
sent improved state of things, much is  
wanting to complete and perfect that more  
simple part of their intellectual map which  
relates to the material universe.—Of the  
inconsiderable progress hitherto made to-  
wards a just delineation of the method to  
be pursued in studying the mental phe-  
nomena, no other evidence is necessary  
than this, That the sources of error and  
false judgment so peculiarly connected,  
in consequence of the association of  
ideas

ideas, with studies in which our best interests are immediately and deeply concerned, have never yet been investigated with such accuracy, as to afford effectual aid to the student, in his attempts to counteract their influence. One of these sources alone, —that which arises from the imperfections of language,—furnishes an exception to the general remark. It attracted, fortunately, the particular notice of LOCKE, whose observations with respect to it, compose, perhaps, the most valuable part of his philosophical writings; and, since the time of CONDILLAC, the subject has been still more deeply analyzed by others. Even on this article, much yet remains to be done; but enough has been already accomplished to justify the profound aphorism in which BACON pointed it out to the attention of his followers:—“ *Credunt homines*  
“ *rationem suam verbis imperare; sed fit*  
“ *etiam*

“ etiam ut verba vim suam super rationem retorqueant \*.”

Into these logical discussions concerning the means of advancing the philosophy of human nature, Dr REID has seldom entered ; and still more rarely has he indulged himself in tracing the numerous relations, by which this philosophy is connected with the practical business of life. But he has done what was still more essential at the time he wrote : he has exemplified, with the happiest success, that method of investigation by which alone any solid progress can be made ; directing his inquiries to a subject which forms a necessary groundwork for the labours of  
his

\* This passage of BACON forms the motto to a very ingenious and philosophical dissertation, (lately published by M. PREVOST of Geneva), entitled, “ *Des Signes envisagés relativement à leur Influence sur la Formation des Idées.*” Paris, an 8.

his successors,—an analysis of the various powers and principles belonging to our constitution. Of the importance of this undertaking, it is sufficient to observe, that it stands somewhat, although I confess not altogether, in the same relation to the different branches of intellectual and moral science, (such as grammar, rhetoric, logic, ethics, natural theology, and politics), in which the anatomy of the human body stands to the different branches of physiology and pathology. And as a course of medical education naturally, or rather necessarily, begins with a general survey of man's animal frame ; so, I apprehend, that the proper, or rather the essential preparation for those studies which regard our nobler concerns, is an examination of the principles which belong to man as an intelligent, active, social, and moral being. Nor does the importance of such an analysis rest here ; it  
exerts

arts and influence over all those sciences  
 arts which are connected with the  
 material world; and the philosophy of  
 BACON itself, while it points out the road  
 to physical truth, is but a branch of the  
 philosophy of the human mind.

The substance of these remarks is admirably expressed by Mr HUME in the following passage,—allowances being made for a few trifling peculiarities of expression, borrowed from the theories which were prevalent at the time when he wrote:

“ ’Tis evident, that all the sciences have  
 “ a relation, greater or less, to human na-  
 “ ture, and that, however wide any of  
 “ them may seem to run from it, they  
 “ still return back by one passage or ano-  
 “ ther. Even mathematics, natural phi-  
 “ losophy, and natural religion, are in  
 “ some measure dependent on the science  
 “ of man; since they lie under the cog-  
 “ nifance

“ nifance of men, and are judged of by  
“ their powers and faculties. It is impos-  
“ fible to tell what changes and improve-  
“ ments we might make in thefe fciences,  
“ were we thoroughly acquainted with  
“ the extent and force of human under-  
“ ftanding, and could explain the nature  
“ of the ideas we employ, and of the  
“ operations we perform in our reason-  
“ ings.

“ If, therefore, the fciences of mathe-  
“ matics, natural philofophy, and natural  
“ religion, have fuch a dependence on  
“ the knowledge of man, what may be  
“ expected in the other fciences, whose  
“ connection with human nature is more  
“ clofe and intimate? The fole end of  
“ logic is to explain the principles and  
“ operations of our reasoning faculty, and  
“ the nature of our ideas : morals and cri-  
“ ticifm regard our taftes and fentiments :  
“ and

“ and politics consider men as united in  
 “ society, and dependent on each other.  
 “ In these four sciences of logic, morals,  
 “ criticism and politics, is comprehended  
 “ almost every thing which it can any way  
 “ import us to be acquainted with, or  
 “ which can tend either to the improve-  
 “ ment or ornament of the human mind.

“ Here then, is the only expedient from  
 “ which we can hope for success in our  
 “ philosophical researches; to leave the  
 “ tedious, lingering method, which we  
 “ have hitherto followed; and instead of  
 “ taking, now and then, a castle or village  
 “ on the frontier, to march up directly to  
 “ the capital or centre of these sciences,  
 “ to human nature itself; which being  
 “ once masters of, we may every where  
 “ else hope for an easy victory. From this  
 “ station, we may extend our conquests  
 “ over all those sciences which more inti-  
 “ mately

“ mately concern human life, and ~~may~~  
 “ afterwards proceed at leisure to discover  
 “ more fully those which are the objects  
 “ of pure curiosity. There is no question  
 “ of importance, whose decision is not  
 “ comprized in the science of man ; and  
 “ there is none which can be decided  
 “ with any certainty, before we become  
 “ acquainted with that science.”

To prepare the way for the accomplishment of the design so forcibly recommended in the foregoing quotation, by exemplifying, in an analysis of our most important intellectual and active principles, the only method of carrying it successfully into execution, was the great object of Dr REID, in all his various philosophical publications. In examining these principles, he had chiefly in view a vindication of those fundamental laws of belief which form the groundwork of human knowledge,

ledge,

Judge, against the attacks made on their  
 Authority in some modern systems of scepti-  
 cism ; leaving to his successors the more  
 agreeable task of applying the philosophy  
 of the mind to its practical uses. On the  
*analysis* and classification of our powers,  
 which he has proposed, much room for  
 improvement must have been left in so  
 vast an undertaking ; but imperfections  
 of this kind do not necessarily affect the  
 justness of his conclusions, even where  
 they may suggest to future inquirers the  
 advantages of a simpler arrangement, and  
 a more definite phraseology. Nor must  
 it be forgotten, that, in consequence of the  
 plan he has followed, the mistakes which  
 may be detected in particular parts of  
 his works, imply no such weakness in the  
 fabric he has reared, as might have been  
 justly apprehended, had he presented a  
 connected system founded on gratuitous  
 hypotheses, or on arbitrary definitions.

The detections, on the contrary, of his occasional errors, may be expected, from the invariable consistency and harmony of truth, to throw new lights on those speculations which he has conducted with greater success; as the correction of a particular misstatement in an authentic history, is often found, by completing an imperfect link, or reconciling a seeming contradiction, to dispel the doubts which hung over the most faithful and accurate details of the narrative.

In Dr REID's first performance, he confined himself entirely to the five senses, and the principles of our nature necessarily connected with them; reserving the further prosecution of the subject for a future period. At that time, indeed, he seems to have thought, that a more comprehensive examination of the mind was an enterprize too great for one individual.

“ The

“ The powers,” he observes, “ of memo-  
 “ ry, of imagination, of taste, of reasoning,  
 “ of moral perception, the will, the pas-  
 “ sions, the affections, and all the active  
 “ powers of the soul, present a boundless  
 “ field of philosophical disquisition, which  
 “ the author of this *Inquiry* is far from  
 “ thinking himself able to explore with ac-  
 “ curacy. Many authors of ingenuity,  
 “ ancient and modern, have made incur-  
 “ sions into this vast territory, and have  
 “ communicated useful observations; but  
 “ there is reason to believe, that those who  
 “ have pretended to give us a map of the  
 “ whole, have satisfied themselves with a  
 “ very inaccurate and incomplete survey.  
 “ If GALILEO had attempted a complete  
 “ system of natural philosophy, he had pro-  
 “ bably done little service to mankind;  
 “ but, by confining himself to what was  
 “ within his comprehension, he laid the  
 “ foundation of a system of knowledge,  
 “ which

“ which rises by degrees, and does honour  
“ to the human understanding. NEWTON,  
“ building upon this foundation, and in  
“ like manner, confining his inquiries to  
“ the law of gravitation, and the proper-  
“ ties of light, performed wonders. If  
“ he had attempted a great deal more, he  
“ had done a great deal less, and perhaps  
“ nothing at all. Ambitious of following  
“ such great examples, with unequal steps,  
“ alas ! and unequal force, we have at-  
“ tempted an inquiry into one little cor-  
“ ner only, of the human mind ; that cor-  
“ ner which seems to be most exposed to  
“ vulgar observation, and to be most ea-  
“ sily comprehended ; and yet, if we have  
“ delineated it justly, it must be acknow-  
“ ledged, that the accounts heretofore  
“ given of it were very lame, and wide  
“ of the truth.”

From these observations, when compar-  
ed

ed. with the magnitude of the work which the author lived to execute, there is some ground for supposing, that, in the progress of his researches, he became more and more sensible of the mutual connection and dependence which exists among the conclusions we form concerning the various principles of human nature ; even concerning those which seem, on a superficial view, to have the most remote relation to each other : And it was fortunate for the world, that, in this respect, he was induced to extend his views so far beyond the limits of his original design. His examination, indeed, of the powers of external perception, and of the questions immediately connected with them, bears marks of a still more minute diligence and accuracy than appear in some of his speculations concerning the other parts of our frame ; and what he has written on the former subject, in his *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, is evidently

dently more highly finished both in matter and form, than the volumes which he published in his more advanced years. The value, however, of these is incalculable to future adventurers in the same arduous undertaking; not only, in consequence of the aids they furnish as a rough draught of the field to be examined, but, by the example they exhibit of a method of investigation on such subjects, hitherto very imperfectly understood by philosophers. It is by the originality of this method, so systematically pursued in all his researches, still more than by the importance of his particular conclusions, that he stands so conspicuously distinguished among those who have hitherto prosecuted analytically the study of Man.

I have heard it sometimes mentioned, as a subject of regret, that the writers who have applied themselves to this branch of knowledge,

knowledge, have, in general, aimed at a great deal more than it was possible to accomplish ; extending their researches to all the different parts of our constitution, while a long life might be well employed in examining and describing the phenomena connected with any one particular faculty. Dr REID, in a passage already quoted from his *Inquiry*, might have been supposed to give some countenance to this opinion ; if his own subsequent labours did not so strongly sanction the practice in question. The truth, I apprehend, is, That such detached researches concerning the human mind, can seldom be attempted with much hope of success ; and that those who have recommended them, have not attended sufficiently to the circumstances which so remarkably distinguish this study, from that which has for its object the philosophy of the material world. A few remarks in illustration of this proposition

seem

seem to me to be necessary, in order to justify the reasonableness of Dr REID's undertaking ; and they will be found to apply with still greater force, to the labours of such, as may wish to avail themselves of a similar analysis in explaining the varieties of human genius and character, or in developing the latent capacities of the youthful mind.

One consideration of a more general nature is, in the first place, worthy of notice ; that in the infancy of every science, the grand and fundamental *desideratum* is a bold and comprehensive Outline ;—somewhat for the same reason, that, in the cultivation of an extensive country, forests must be cleared, and wildernesses reclaimed, before the limits of private property are fixed with accuracy ; and long before the period, when the divisions and subdivisions of separate possessions give rise to  
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the details of a curious and refined husbandry. The speculations of Lord BACON embraced all the objects of human knowledge. Those of NEWTON and BOYLE were confined to physics; but included an astonishing range of the material universe. The labours of their successors in our own times, have been employed with no less zeal, in pursuing those more particular, but equally abstruse investigations, in which They were unable to engage, for want of a sufficient stock, both of facts and of general principles; and which did not perhaps interest their curiosity in any considerable degree.

If these observations are allowed to hold to a certain extent with respect to all the sciences, they apply in a more peculiar manner to the subjects treated of in Dr REID's writings;—subjects which are all  
fo

so intimately connected, that it may be doubted, if it be possible to investigate any one completely, without some general acquaintance, at least, with the rest. Even the theory of the Understanding may receive important lights from an examination of the Active and the Moral powers; the state of which in the mind of every individual, will be found to have a powerful influence on his intellectual character:—while, on the other hand, an accurate analysis of the faculties of the Understanding, would probably go far to obviate the sceptical difficulties which have been started concerning the Origin of our Moral Ideas. It appears to me, therefore, that, whatever be the department of mental science that we propose more particularly to cultivate, it is necessary to begin with a survey of human nature in all its various parts; studying these parts, however, not so much on **their** own account,

account, as with a reference to the applications of which our conclusions are susceptible to our favourite purpose. The researches of Dr REID, when considered carefully in the relation which they bear to each other, afford numberless illustrations of the truth of this remark. His leading design was evidently to overthrow the modern system of scepticism; and at every successive step of his progress, new and unexpected lights break in on his fundamental principles.

It is, however, chiefly in their practical application to the conduct of the understanding, and the culture of the heart, that such partial views are likely to be dangerous; for here, they tend not only to mislead our theoretical conclusions, but to counteract our improvement and happiness. Of this I am so fully convinced, that the most faulty theories of human nature,

ture, provided only they embrace the whole of it, appear to me less mischievous in their probable effects, than those more accurate and microscopical researches which are habitually confined to one particular corner of our constitution. It is easy to conceive, that where the attention is wholly engrossed with the intellectual powers, the moral principles will be in danger of running to waste : and it is no less certain, on the other hand, that, by confining our care to the moral constitution alone, we may suffer the understanding to remain under the influence of unhappy prejudices, and destitute of those just and enlightened views, without which the worthiest dispositions are of little use, either to ourselves or society. An exclusive attention to any one of the subordinate parts of our frame,—to the culture of taste, (for example), or of the argumentative powers, or even to the refinement of our moral sentiments and feeling,—must be attended

attended with a hazard proportionally greater.

“ In forming the human character,” says BACON, in a passage which Lord BOLINGBROKE has pronounced to be one of the finest and deepest in his writings, “ we must not proceed, as a statuary does in forming a statue, who works sometimes on the face, sometimes on the limbs, sometimes on the folds of the drapery ; but we must proceed (and it is in our power to proceed) as nature does in forming a flower, or any other of her productions ;—she throws out altogether, and at once, the whole system of being, and the rudiments of all the parts. *Rudimenta partium omnium simul parit et producit* \*.”

Of

\* In the foregoing paragraph, I have borrowed (with a very trifling alteration) Lord BOLINGBROKE's words, in a beautiful paraphrase on BACON's remark. ---See his *Idea of a Patriot King*.

Of this passage, so strongly marked with BACON's capacious intellect, and so richly adorned with his "philosophical fancy\*," I will not weaken the impression by any comment; and, indeed, to those who do not intuitively perceive its evidence, no comment would be useful.

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IN what I have hitherto said of Dr REID's speculations, I have confined myself to such general views of the scope of his researches, and of his mode of philosophizing, as seemed most likely to facilitate the perusal of his works to those readers who have not been much conversant with these abstract disquisitions. A slight review of some of the more important and fundamental objections which have been proposed to his doctrines, may,

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\* An expression applied by GIBBON to the eloquence of BURKE.

I hope, be useful as a farther preparation for the same course of study.

Of these objections, the four following appear to me to be chiefly entitled to attention.

1. That he has assumed gratuitously in all his reasonings, that theory concerning the human soul, which the scheme of Materialism calls in question.

2. That his views tend to damp the ardour of philosophical curiosity, by stating as ultimate facts, phenomena which may be resolved into principles more simple and general.

3. That, by an unnecessary multiplication of original or instinctive principles, he has brought the science of mind into a state more perplexed and unsatisfactory, than

than that in which it was left by LOCKE and his successors.

4. That his philosophy, by sanctioning an appeal from the decisions of the learned to the voice of the multitude, is unfavourable to a spirit of free inquiry, and lends additional stability to popular errors.

1. With respect to Dr REID's supposed assumption of a doubtful hypothesis concerning the nature of the thinking and sentient principle, it is almost sufficient for me to observe, that the charge is directed against that very point of his philosophy in which it is most completely invulnerable. The circumstance which peculiarly characterizes the inductive science of Mind is, that it professes to abstain from all speculations concerning its nature and essence; confining the attention entirely

tirely to *phenomena*, for which we have the evidence of consciousness, and to the laws by which these phenomena are regulated. In this respect, it differs equally, in its scope, from the pneumatological discussions of the schools; and from the no less visionary theories, so loudly vaunted by the physiological metaphysicians of more modern times. Compared with the first, it differs, as the inquiries of the *mechanical* philosophers concerning the laws of moving bodies, differ from the discussions of the ancient sophists concerning the existence and the nature of motion. Compared with the other, the difference is analogous to what exists between the conclusions of NEWTON concerning the law of gravitation, and his *query* concerning the invisible ether of which he supposed it might, possibly, be the effect. The facts which this inductive science aims at ascertaining, rest on their own proper evi-

dence;—an evidence unconnected with all these hypotheses, and which would not, in the smallest degree, be affected, although the truth of any one of them should be fully established. It is not, therefore, on account of its inconsistency with any favourite opinions of my own, that I would oppose the disquisitions either of scholastic pneumatology; or of physiological metaphysics; but because I consider them as an idle waste of time and genius, on questions where our conclusions can neither be verified nor overturned by an appeal to experiment or observation. Sir ISAAC NEWTON's query concerning the cause of gravitation was certainly not *inconsistent* with his own discoveries concerning its laws; but what would have been the consequences to the world, if he had indulged himself in the prosecution of hypothetical theories with respect to the former, instead

of

of directing his astonishing powers to an investigation of the latter?

That the general spirit of Dr REID'S Philosophy is hostile to the conclusions of the Materialist, is indeed a fact: Not, however, because his system rests on the contrary hypothesis as a fundamental principle, but because his inquiries have a powerful tendency to wean the understanding gradually from those obstinate associations and prejudices, to which the common mechanical theories of mind owe all their plausibility. It is, in truth, much more from such examples of sound research concerning the Laws of Thought, than from any direct metaphysical refutation, that a change is to be expected in the opinions of those who have been accustomed to confound together two classes of phenomena, so completely and essentially different.

rent.—But this view of the subject does not belong to the present argument.

It has been recommended of late, by a medical author of great reputation, to those who wish to study the human mind, to begin with preparing themselves for the task by the study of anatomy. I must confess, I cannot perceive the advantages of this order of investigation; as the anatomy of the body does not seem to me more likely to throw light on the philosophy of the mind, than an analysis of the mind to throw light on the physiology of the body. To ascertain, indeed, the general laws of their connexion from facts established by observation or experiment, is a reasonable and most interesting object of philosophical curiosity; and in this inquiry, (which was long ago proposed and recommended by Lord BACON), a knowledge of the constitution both of  
mind

mind and body is indispensably requisite ; but even here, if we wish to proceed on firm ground, the two classes of facts must be kept completely distinct ; so that neither of them may be warped or distorted, in consequence of theories suggested by their supposed relations or analogies \*. Thus, in many of the phenomena, connected with Custom and Habit, there is ample scope for investigating general laws, both with respect to our mental and our corporeal frame ; but what light do we derive from such information concerning this part of our constitution as is contained in the following sentence of LOCKE ? “ Habits “ seem to be but trains of motion in the “ animal spirits, which, once set a-going, “ continue in the same steps they have “ been used to, which by often treading “ are worn into a smooth path.” In like manner,

manner, the laws which regulate the connexion between the mind and our external organs, in the case of Perception, have furnished a very fertile subject of examination to some of the best of our modern philosophers ; but how impotent does the genius of NEWTON itself appear, when it attempts to shoot the gulf which separates the sensible world, and the sentient principle ? “ Is  
“ not the sensorium of animals,” he asks in one of his queries, “ the place where  
“ the sentient substance is present, and to  
“ which the sensible species of things are  
“ brought through the nerves and brain,  
“ that they may be perceived by the mind  
“ present in that place ?”

It ought to be remembered also, that this inquiry, with respect to the laws regulating the connexion between our bodily organization, and the phenomena subjected to our own consciousness, is but one particular

particular department of the philosophy of the mind ; and that there still remains a wide and indeed boundless region, where all our *data* must be obtained from our own mental operations. In examining, for instance, the powers of judgment and reasoning, let any person of sound understanding, after perusing the observations of BACON on the different classes of our prejudices, or those of LOCKE on the abuse of words, turn his attention to the speculations of some of our contemporary theorists; and he will at once perceive the distinction between the two modes of investigation which I wish at present to contrast. “ Reasoning,” says one of the most ingenious, and original of these, “ is that operation “ of the *sensorium*, by which we excite two “ or many tribes of ideas; and then re-ex- “ cite the ideas, in which they differ or “ correspond. If we determine this difference, it is called Judgment; if we “ in

“ in vain endeavour to determine it, it is  
“ called Doubting.—If we re-excite the  
“ ideas in which they differ, it is called  
“ Distinguishing ; if we re-excite those in  
“ which they correspond, it is called Com-  
“ paring \*.”—In what acceptation the  
word *idea* is to be understood in the fore-  
going passage, may be learned from the  
following definition of the same author :—  
“ The word *idea* has various meanings in  
“ the writers of metaphysic : It is here  
“ used simply for those notions of external  
“ things, which our organs of sense bring  
“ us acquainted with originally ; and is  
“ defined, a contraction or motion, or con-  
“ figuration of the fibres, which constitute  
“ the immediate organ of sense †.”—Mr  
HUME, who was less of a physiologist than  
Dr DARWIN, has made use of a language  
by no means so theoretical and arbitrary ;  
but

\* *Zoönomia*, vol. i. p. 181. 3d edit.

† *Ibid.* vol. i. pp. 11, 12.

but still widely removed from the simplicity and precision essentially necessary in studies, where every thing depends on the cautious use of terms. “Belief,” according to him, is “a lively idea related to  
 “or associated with a present impression;  
 “Memory is the faculty by which we repeat our impressions, so as that they retain a considerable degree of their first  
 “vivacity, and are somewhat intermediate  
 “betwixt an idea and an impression.”

According to the views of Dr REID, the terms which express the simple powers of the mind, are considered as unsusceptible of definition or explanation; the words, Feeling, for example, Knowledge, Will, Doubt, Belief, being, in this respect, on the same footing with the words, Green or Scarlet, Sweet or Bitter. To the names of these mental operations, all men annex some notions, more or less distinct; and the

the only way of conveying to them notions more correct, is by teaching them to exercise their own powers of reflection. The definitions quoted from HUME and DARWIN, even if they were more unexceptionable in point of phraseology, would, for these reasons, be unphilosophical, as attempts to simplify what is incapable of analysis; but as they are actually stated, they not only envelop truth in mystery, but lay a foundation, at the very outset, for an erroneous theory. It is worth while to add, that of the two theories in question, that of DARWIN, how inferior soever, in the estimation of competent judges, as a philosophical work, is by far the best calculated to impose on a very wide circle of readers, by the mixture it exhibits of crude and visionary metaphysics, with those important facts and conclusions which might be expected from the talents and experience of such

a writer, in the present advanced state of medical and physiological science. The questions which have been hitherto confined to a few, prepared for such discussions by habits of philosophical study, are thus submitted to the consideration,—not only of the cultivated and enlightened minds, which adorn the medical profession,—but of the half-informed multitude who follow the medical trade: Nor is it to be doubted, that many of these will give the author credit, upon subjects of which they feel themselves incompetent to judge, for the same ability which he displays within their own professional sphere. The hypothetical principles assumed by HUME are intelligible to those only who are familiarized to the language of the schools; and his ingenuity and elegance, captivating as they are to men of taste and refinement, possess slight attractions to the majority

majority of such as are most likely to be misled by his conclusions.

After all, I do not apprehend that the physiological theories concerning the mind, which have made so much noise of late, will produce a very lasting impression. The splendour of Dr DARWIN's accomplishments could not fail to bestow a temporary importance on whatever opinions were sanctioned by his name; as the chemical discoveries which have immortalized that of PRIESTLEY, have, for a while, recalled from oblivion the reveries of HARTLEY. But, abstracting from these accidental instances, in which human reason seems to have held a retrograde course, there has certainly been, since the time of DES CARTES, a continual, and, on the whole, a very remarkable approach to the inductive plan of studying human nature. We may trace  
this

this in the writings even of those who profess to consider *thought* merely as *an agitation of the brain*;—in the writings more particularly of HUME and of HELVETIUS; both of whom, although they may have occasionally expressed themselves in an unguarded manner concerning the nature of mind, have, in their most useful and practical disquisitions, been prevented, by their own good sense, from blending any theory with respect to the *causes* of the intellectual phenomena, with the history of facts, or the investigation of general laws. The authors who form the most conspicuous exceptions to this gradual progress, consist chiefly of men, whose errors may be easily accounted for, by the prejudices connected with their circumscribed habits of observation and inquiry;—of Physiologists, accustomed to attend to that part alone of the human frame, which the knife of the Anatomist can lay open ;

open ; or of Chemists, who enter on the analysis of Thought, fresh from the decompositions of the laboratory ;—carrying into the Theory of Mind itself (what BACON expressively calls) “ the smoke and “ tarnish of the furnace.” Of the value of such pursuits, none can think more highly than myself ; but I must be allowed to observe, that the most distinguished pre-eminence in them does not necessarily imply a capacity of collected and abstracted reflection, or an understanding superior to the prejudices of early association, and the illusions of popular language. I will not go so far as CICERO, when he ascribes to those who possess these advantages, a more than ordinary vigour of intellect : “ *Magni est ingenii revocare mentem a sensibus, et cogitationem a consuetudine abducere.*” I would only claim for them, the merit of patient and cautious research ;  
and

and would exact from their antagonists the same qualifications\*.

In offering these remarks, I have no wish to exalt any one branch of useful knowledge at the expence of another, but to combat prejudices equally fatal to the progress of them all.—With the same view, I cannot help taking notice of a prevailing, but very mistaken idea, that the formation of a hypothetical system is a stronger proof of inventive genius, than the patient investigation of Nature in the way of induction. To form a system, appears to the young and inexperienced understanding, a species of creation; to ascend slowly to general conclusions, from the observation and comparison of particular facts, is to comment servilely on the works of another.

No

\*NOTE D.

No opinion, surely, can be more groundless. To fix on a few principles or even on a single principle, as the foundation of a theory; and by an artful statement of supposed facts, aided by a dexterous use of language, to give a plausible explanation, by means of it, of an immense number of phenomena; is within the reach of most men whose talents have been a little exercised among the subtilties of the schools: Whereas, to follow Nature through all her varieties with a quick yet an exact eye;—to record faithfully what she exhibits, and to record nothing more;—to trace, amidst the diversity of her operations, the simple and comprehensive laws by which they are regulated, and sometimes to guess at the beneficent purposes to which they are subservient,—may be safely pronounced to be the highest effort of a created intelligence. And, accordingly, the number of ingenious theorists

rists has, in every age, been great ; that of sound philosophers has been wonderfully small ;—or rather, they are only beginning now to have a glimpse of their way, in consequence of the combined lights furnished by their predecessors.

DES CARTES aimed at a complete system of physics, deduced *à priori* from the abstract suggestions of his own reason : NEWTON aspired no higher, than at a faithful “ interpretation of Nature,” in a few of the more general laws which she presents to our notice : and yet the intellectual power displayed in the voluminous writings of the former vanishes into nothing, when compared with what we may trace in a single page of the latter. On this occasion a remark of Lord BACON appears singularly apposite ; that “ ALEXANDER and CÆSAR, though they acted “ without the aid of magic or prodigy,  
 • H “ performed

“ performed exploits that are truly great-  
“ er than what Fable reports of King AR-  
“ THUR or AMADIS DE GAUL.”

I shall only add farther on this head, that the last observation holds more strictly with respect to the philosophy of the human mind, than any other branch of science ; for there is no subject whatever, on which it is so easy to form theories calculated to impose on the multitude ; and none, where the discovery of truth is attended with so many difficulties. One great cause of this is, the analogical or theoretical terms employed in ordinary language to express every thing relating either to our intellectual or active powers ; in consequence of which, specious explanations of the most mysterious phenomena may be given to superficial inquirers ; while, at the same time, the labour of just investigation

investigation is increased to an incalculable degree.

2. To allege, that “ this circumscription of the field of our inquiries concerning the mind tends to damp the ardour of philosophical curiosity,” is a charge not less unfounded than the former ; inasmuch as every physical inquiry concerning the material world is circumscribed by limits precisely analogous. In all our investigations, whatever their subject may be, the business of philosophy is confined to a reference of particular facts to other facts more general ; and our most successful researches must at length terminate in some law of nature, of which no explanation can be given.—In its application to Dr REID, this objection has, I think, been more pointedly directed against his reasonings concerning the process of nature

ture in perception ; a part of his writings which (as it is of fundamental importance in his general system) he has laboured with peculiar care. The result is, indeed, by no means flattering to the pride of those theorists, who profess to explain every thing ; for it amounts to an acknowledgment, that, after all the lights which anatomy and physiology supply, the information we obtain, by means of our senses, concerning the existence and the qualities of matter, is no less incomprehensible to our faculties, than it appears to the most illiterate peasant ; and that all we have gained, is a more precise and complete acquaintance with some particulars in our animal economy,—highly interesting indeed when regarded in their proper light, as accessions to our physical knowledge, but, considered in connexion with the philosophy of the mind, affording only a more accurate statement of the astonishing

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ing phenomena which we would vainly endeavour to explain. This language has been charged, but most unjustly and ignorantly, with *mysticism*; for the same charge may be brought, with equal fairness, against all the most important discoveries in the sciences. It was in truth, the very objection urged against NEWTON, when his adversaries contended, that *gravity* was to be ranked with the *occult qualities* of the schoolmen, till its mechanical cause should be assigned; and the answer given to this objection by Sir ISAAC NEWTON's commentator, Mr MACLAURIN, may be literally applied, in the instance before us, to the inductive philosophy of the human mind.

“ The opponents of NEWTON, finding  
 “ nothing to object to his observations and  
 “ reasonings, pretended to find a resemblance  
 “ between his doctrines and the  
 “ exploded tenets of the scholastic philosophy.

“ fophy. They triumphed mightily in  
“ treating gravity as an occult quality,  
“ because he did not pretend to deduce  
“ this principle fully from its cause. . . .  
“ . . . I know not that ever it was made  
“ an objection to the circulation of the  
“ blood, that there is no small difficulty  
“ in accounting for it mechanically.  
“ They, too, who first extended gravity  
“ to air, vapour, and to all bodies round  
“ the earth, had their praise ; though the  
“ cause of gravity was as obscure as be-  
“ fore ; or *rather appeared more mysterious*,  
“ after they had shewn, that there was no  
“ body found near the earth, exempt from  
“ gravity, that might be supposed to be  
“ its cause. Why, then, were his admi-  
“ rable discoveries, by which this princi-  
“ ple was extended over the universe, so  
“ ill relished by some philosophers ? The  
“ truth is, he had, with great evidence,  
“ overthrown the boasted schemes by  
“ which

“ which they pretended to unravel all the  
 “ mysteries of Nature ; and the philoso-  
 “ phy he introduced, in place of them,  
 “ carrying with it a sincere confession of  
 “ our being far from a complete and per-  
 “ fect knowledge of it, could not please  
 “ those who had been accustomed to ima-  
 “ gine themselves possessed of the eternal  
 “ reasons and primary causes of all things.

“ It was, however, no new thing that  
 “ this philosophy should meet with oppo-  
 “ sition. All the useful discoveries that  
 “ were made in former times, and parti-  
 “ cularly in the seventeenth century, had  
 “ to struggle with the prejudices of those  
 “ who had accustomed themselves, not so  
 “ much as to think but in a certain syste-  
 “ matic way ; who could not be prevailed  
 “ on to abandon their favourite schemes,  
 “ while they were able to imagine the  
 “ least pretext for continuing the dispute.

“ Every

“ Every art and talent was displayed to sup-  
 “ port their falling cause ; no aid seemed  
 “ foreign to them that could in any man-  
 “ ner annoy their adversary ; and such,  
 “ often was their obstinacy, that truth was  
 “ able to make little progress, till they  
 “ were succeeded by younger persons who  
 “ had not so strongly imbibed their pre-  
 “ judices.”

These excellent observations are not the  
 less applicable to the subject now under  
 consideration, that the part of Dr REID's  
 writings which suggested the quotation,  
 leads only to the correction of an invete-  
 rate prejudice, not to any new general  
 conclusion. It is probable, indeed, (now  
 that the Ideal Theory has in a great mea-  
 sure disappeared from our late metaphy-  
 sical systems), that those who have a plea-  
 sure in detracting from the merits of their  
 predecessors, may be disposed to represent  
 it

it as an idle waste of labour and ingenuity, to have entered into a serious refutation of a hypothesis at once gratuitous and inconceivable. A different judgment, however, will be formed by such, as are acquainted with the extensive influence, which, from the earliest accounts of science, this single prejudice has had in vitiating almost every branch of the philosophy of the mind; and who, at the same time, recollect the names of the illustrious men, by whom, in more modern times, it has been adopted as an incontrovertible principle. It is sufficient for me to mention those of BERKELEY, HUME, LOCKE, CLARKE and NEWTON. To the two first of these, it has served as the basis of their sceptical conclusions, which seem indeed to follow from it as necessary consequences; while the others repeatedly refer to it in their reasonings, as one of those facts concerning the mind, of which it would  
be

be equally superfluous to attempt a proof or a refutation.

I have enlarged on this part of Dr REID's writings the more fully, as he was himself disposed, on all occasions, to rest upon it his chief merit as an author. In proof of this, I shall transcribe a few sentences from a letter of his to Dr GREGORY, dated 20th August 1790.

“ It would be want of candour not to  
 “ own, that I think there is some merit  
 “ in what you are pleased to call *my Philosophy*;  
 “ but I think it lies chiefly in  
 “ having called in question the common  
 “ theory of *Ideas* or *Images of things in*  
 “ *the mind* being the only objects of  
 “ thought ; a theory founded on natural  
 “ prejudices, and so universally received  
 “ as to be interwoven with the structure  
 “ of language. Yet were I to give you a  
 “ detail

“ detail of what led me to call in question  
 “ this theory, after I had long held it as  
 “ self-evident and unquestionable, you  
 “ would think, as I do, that there was much  
 “ of chance in the matter. The disco-  
 “ very was the birth of time, not of ge-  
 “ nius; and BERKELEY and HUME did  
 “ more to bring it to light than the man  
 “ that hit upon it. I think there is hard-  
 “ ly any thing that can be called *mine* in  
 “ the philosophy of the mind, which does  
 “ not follow with ease from the detection  
 “ of this prejudice.

“ I must, therefore, beg of you most  
 “ earnestly, to make no contrast in my  
 “ favour to the disparagement of my pre-  
 “ decessors in the same pursuit. I can  
 “ truly say of them, and shall always avow,  
 “ what you are pleased to say of me, that  
 “ but for the assistance I have received  
 “ from

“ from their writings, I never could have  
“ wrote or thought what I have done.”

3. Somewhat connected with the last objection, are the censures which have been so frequently bestowed on Dr REID, for  
“ an unnecessary and unsystematical multiplication of original or instinctive principles.”

In reply to these censures, I have little to add to what I have remarked on the same topic, in the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*. That the fault which is thus ascribed to Dr REID has been really committed by some ingenious writers in this part of the Island, I most readily allow ; nor will I take upon me to assert, that he has, in no instance, fallen into it himself. Such instances, however, will be found, on an accurate examination of his works, to be comparatively few, and to bear a  
very

very trifling proportion to those, in which he has most successfully and decisively displayed his acuteness, in exposing the premature and flimsy generalizations of his predecessors.

A certain degree of leaning to that extreme to which Dr REID seems to have inclined, was, at the time when he wrote, much safer than the opposite bias. From the earliest ages, the sciences in general, and more particularly the science of the human mind, have been vitiated by an undue love of simplicity; and, in the course of the last century, this disposition, after having been long displayed in subtle theories concerning the Active Powers, or the Principles of Human Conduct, has been directed to similar refinements with respect to the Faculties of the Understanding, and the Truths with which they are conversant. Mr HUME himself has coincided

coincided so far with the HARTLEIAN school, as to represent the “ principle of  
 “ union and cohesion among our simple  
 “ ideas as a kind of *attraction*, of as uni-  
 “ versal application in the Mental world  
 “ as in the Natural\*,” and Dr HARTLEY, with a still more sanguine imagination, looked forward to an æra, “ when future  
 “ generations shall put all kinds of evi-  
 “ dences and inquiries into mathematical  
 “ forms ; reducing ARISTOTLE’S ten ca-  
 “ tegories, and Bishop WILKIN’S forty  
 “ *summa genera*, to the head of quantity  
 “ alone, so as to make mathematics and  
 “ logic, natural history and civil history,  
 “ natural philosophy and philosophy of all  
 “ other kinds, coincide *omni ex parte* †.”

It is needless to remark the obvious tendency of such premature generaliza-  
 tions

\* *Treatise of Human Nature*, vol. i. p. 30.

† HARTLEY *on Man*, p. 207. 4to edit. Lond. 1791.

tions to withdraw the attention from the study of particular phenomena ; while the effect of REID's mode of philosophizing, even in those instances where it is carried to an excess, is to detain us, in this preliminary step, a little longer than is absolutely necessary. The truth is, that when the phenomena are once ascertained, generalization is here of comparatively little value, and a task of far less difficulty than to observe facts with precision, and to record them with fairness.

In no part of Dr REID's writings, I am inclined to think, could more plausible criticisms be made on this ground, than in his classification of our active principles; but even there, the facts are always placed fully and distinctly before the reader. That several of the benevolent affections which he has stated as ultimate facts in our constitution, might be analyzed into the

the same general principle differently modified, according to circumstances, there can, in my opinion, be little doubt. This, however, (as I have elsewhere observed\*), notwithstanding the stress which has been sometimes laid upon it, is chiefly a question of arrangement. Whether we suppose these affections to be all ultimate facts, or some of them to be resolvable into other facts more general; they are equally to be regarded as constituent parts of human nature; and, upon either supposition, we have equal reason to admire the wisdom with which that nature is adapted to the situation in which it is placed.—The laws which regulate the acquired perceptions of Sight, are surely as much a part of our frame, as those which regulate any of our original perceptions; and, although they require, for their developement, a certain

\* *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, pp. 79, 80.  
2d edit. Edin. 1801.

certain degree of experience and observation in the individual, the uniformity of the result shews, that there is nothing arbitrary nor accidental in their origin. In this point of view, what can be more philosophical, as well as beautiful, than the words of Mr FERGUSON, That “ natural affection springs up in the soul of the mother, as the milk springs in her breast, to furnish nourishment to her child !”— “ The effect is here to the race,” as the same author has excellently observed, “ what the vital motion of the heart is to the individual ; too necessary to the preservation of nature’s works, to be intrusted to the precarious will or intention of those most nearly concerned \*.”

I

The

\* *Principles of Moral and Political Science*, Part I. chap. i. sect. 3. *Of the principles of society in human nature.*---The whole discussion unites, in a singular degree, the soundest philosophy with the most eloquent description.

The question, indeed, concerning the origin of our different affections, leads to some curious analytical disquisitions; but is of very subordinate importance to those inquiries which relate to their laws, and uses, and mutual references. In many ethical systems, however, it seems to have been considered as the most interesting subject of disquisition which this wonderful part of our frame presents.

In Dr REID'S *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, and in his *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, I recollect little that can justly incur a similar censure; notwithstanding the ridicule which Dr PRIESTLEY has attempted to throw on the last of these performances, in his "*Table of REID'S 'Instinctive Principles' &c.*" To examine all the articles enumerated in that table, would require a greater latitude of disquisition

quisition than the limits of this memoir allow ; and, therefore, I shall confine my observations to a few instances, where the precipitancy of the general criticism seems to me to admit of little dispute. In this light I cannot help considering it, when applied to those dispositions or determinations of the mind, to which Dr REID has given the names of the *Principle of Credulity*, and the *Principle of Iteracity*. How far these titles are happily chosen, is a question of little moment ; and on that point I am ready to make every concession. I contend only for what is essentially connected with the objection which has given rise to these remarks.

“ That any man” (says Dr PRIESTLEY)  
 “ should imagine that a peculiar instinc-  
 “ tive principle was necessary to explain  
 “ our giving credit to the relations of  
 “ others, appears to me, who have been  
 “ used

“ used to see things in a different light,  
“ very extraordinary ; and yet this doc-  
“ trine is advanced by Dr REID, and  
“ adopted by Dr BEATTIE. But really”  
(he adds) “ what the former says in fa-  
“ vour of it, is hardly deserving the slight-  
“ est notice \*.”

The passage quoted by Dr PRIESTLEY,  
in justification of this very peremptory  
decision, is as follows : “ If credulity were  
“ the effect of reasoning and experience,  
“ it must grow up and gather strength in  
“ the same proportion as reason and ex-  
“ perience do. But if it is the gift of na-  
“ ture, it will be the strongest in child-  
“ hood, and limited and restrained by ex-  
“ perience ; and the most superficial view  
“ of human life shews that this last is the  
“ case, and not the first.”

To

\* *Examination of REID's Inquiry*, &c. p. 82.

To my own judgment, this argument of Dr REID's, when connected with the excellent illustrations which accompany it, carries complete conviction; and I am confirmed in my opinion by finding that Mr SMITH (a writer inferior to none in acuteness, and strongly disposed by the peculiar bent of his genius, to simplify, as far as possible, the Philosophy of Human Nature) has, in the latest edition of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, acquiesced in this very conclusion; urging in support of it the same reasoning which Dr PRIESTLEY affects to estimate so lightly. “ There  
 “ seems to be in young children an in-  
 “ stinctive disposition to believe whatever  
 “ they are told. Nature seems to have  
 “ judged it necessary for their preservation,  
 “ that they should, for some time at least,  
 “ put implicit confidence in those to whom  
 “ the care of their childhood, and of the  
 “ earliest and most necessary part of their  
 “ education,

“ education, is intrusted. Their credulity, accordingly, is excessive, and it requires long and much experience of the falsehood of mankind to reduce them to a reasonable degree of diffidence and distrust \*.”—That Mr SMITH’s opinion also coincided with Dr REID’s, in what he has stated concerning the *principle of Veracity*, appears evidently from the remarks which immediately follow the passage just quoted.—But I must not add to the length of this memoir by unnecessary citations.

Another instinctive principle mentioned by REID, is “ our belief of the continuance of the present course of nature.” —“ All our knowledge of nature” (he observes) “ beyond our original perceptions is got by experience, and consists in the interpretation of natural signs.”

“ The

\* SMITH’S *Theory*, last edit. Part VII. sect. 4.

“ The appearance of the sign is followed  
 “ by the belief of the thing signified.  
 “ Upon this principle of our constitution,  
 “ not only acquired perception, but also  
 “ inductive reasoning, and all reasoning  
 “ from analogy, is grounded ; and, there-  
 “ fore, for want of a better name, we shall  
 “ beg leave to call it the *inductive princi-*  
 “ *ple*. It is from the force of this princi-  
 “ ple that we immediately assent to that  
 “ axiom, upon which all our knowledge  
 “ of nature is built, that effects of the same  
 “ kind must have the same cause. Take  
 “ away the light of this inductive princi-  
 “ ple, and experience is as blind as a mole.  
 “ She may indeed feel what is present,  
 “ and what immediately touches her, but  
 “ she sees nothing that is either before or  
 “ behind, upon the right hand or upon  
 “ the left, future or past.”

On this doctrine, likewise, the same cri-  
 tic

tic has expressed himself with much severity ; calling it “ a mere quibble ;” and adding, “ Every step that I take among “ this writer’s sophisms, raises my astonishment higher than before.” In this, however, as in many other instances, he has been led to censure Dr REID, not because he was able to see farther than his antagonist, but because he did not see quite so far. TURGOT, in an article inserted in the French *Encyclopedie*, and CONDORCET, in a discourse prefixed to one of his mathematical publications\*, have, both of them, stated the fact with a true philosophical precision ; and, after doing so, have deduced from it an inference, not only the same in substance with that of Dr REID, but almost expressed in the same form of words.

In

\* *Essai sur l'application de l'analyse à la probabilité des décisions rendues à la pluralité des voix.*  
Paris 1785.

In these references, as well as in that already made to Mr SMITH's *Theory*, I would not be understood to lay any undue stress on authority; in a philosophical argument. I wish only, by contrasting the modesty and caution resulting from habits of profound thought, with that theoretical intrepidity which a blindness to insuperable difficulties has a tendency to inspire, to invite those whose prejudices against this part of REID's system rest chiefly on the great names to which they conceive it to be hostile, to re-examine it with a little more attention, before they pronounce finally on its merits.

The prejudices which are apt to occur against a mode of philosophizing, so mortifying to scholastic arrogance, are encouraged greatly by that natural disposition, to refer particular facts to general laws, which is the foundation of all scientific arrangement ;

arrangement ; a principle of the utmost importance to our intellectual constitution, but which requires the guidance of a sound and experienced understanding to accomplish the purposes for which it was destined. They are encouraged also, in no inconsiderable degree, by the acknowledged success of Mathematicians, in raising, on the basis of a few simple *data*, the most magnificent, and at the same time the most solid, fabric of science, of which human genius can boast. The absurd references which Logicians are accustomed to make to EUCLID'S *Elements of Geometry*, as a model which cannot be too studiously copied, both in Physics and in Morals, have contributed, in this as in a variety of other instances, to mislead philosophers from the study of facts, into the false refinements of hypothetical theory.

On these misapplications of Mathematical

tical Method to sciences which rest ultimately on experiment and observation, I shall take another opportunity of offering some strictures. At present, it is sufficient to remark the peculiar nature of the truths about which pure or abstract mathematics are conversant. As these truths have all a necessary connexion with each other (all of them resting ultimately on those definitions or hypotheses which are the principles of our reasoning), the beauty of the science cannot fail to increase in proportion to the simplicity of the *data*, compared with the incalculable variety of consequences which they involve: and to the simplifications and generalizations of theory on such a subject, it is perhaps impossible to conceive any limit. How different is the case in those inquiries, where our first principles are not *definitions* but *facts*; and where our business is not to trace necessary connexions, but the laws which regulate the established order of the universe!

In various attempts which have been lately made, more especially on the Continent, towards a systematical exposition of the elements of Physics, the effects of the mistake I am now censuring are extremely remarkable. The happy use of mathematical principles exhibited in the writings of NEWTON and his followers, having rendered an extensive knowledge of them an indispensable preparation for the study of the Mechanical philosophy, the early habits of thought acquired in the former pursuit are naturally transferred to the latter. Hence the illogical and obscure manner in which its elementary principles have frequently been stated; an attempt being made to deduce from the smallest possible number of *data*, the whole system of truths which it comprehends. The analogy existing among some of the fundamental laws of mechanics, bestows, in the opinion of the multitude,

an

an appearance of plausibility on such attempts ; and their obvious tendency is to withdraw the attention from that unity of design, which it is the noblest employment of philosophy to illustrate, by disguising it under the semblance of an eternal and necessary order, similar to what the mathematician delights to trace among the mutual relations of quantities and figures.

These slight hints may serve as a reply in part to what Dr PRIESTLEY has suggested with respect to the consequences likely to follow, if the spirit of REID'S philosophy should be introduced into physics\*.—One consequence would unquestionably be, a careful separation between the principles which we learn from experience alone, and those which are fairly resolvable, by mathematical or physical reasoning,

\* *Examination of REID'S Inquiry*, p. 110.

reasoning, into other facts still more general ; and, of course, a correction of that false logic, which, while it throws an air of mystery over the plainest and most undeniable facts, levels the study of nature, in point of moral interest, with the investigations of the Geometer or of the Algebraist.

It must not, however, be supposed, that, in the present state of Natural Philosophy, a false logic threatens the same dangerous effects as in the Philosophy of the Mind. It may retard somewhat the progress of the student at his first outset ; or it may confound in his apprehensions, the harmony of systematical order, with the consistency and mutual dependency essential to a series of mathematical theorems : but the fundamental truths of physics are now too well established, and the checks which it furnishes against sophistry are too numerous

merous and palpable, to admit the possibility of any permanent error in our deductions. In the philosophy of the mind, so difficult is the acquisition of those habits of Reflection which can alone lead to a correct knowledge of the intellectual *phenomena*, that a faulty hypothesis, if skilfully fortified by the imposing, though illusory strength of arbitrary definitions and a systematical phraseology, may maintain its ground for a succession of ages.

It will not, I trust, be inferred from any thing I have here advanced, that I mean to offer an apology for those, who, either in physics or morals, would presumptuously state their own opinions with respect to the laws of nature, as a bar against future attempts to simplify and generalize them still farther. To assert, that none of the mechanical explanations yet given of Gravitation are satisfactory; and even  
to

to hint, that ingenuity might be more profitably employed than in the search of such a theory, is something different from a gratuitous assumption of ultimate facts in physics; nor does it imply an obstinate determination to resist legitimate evidence, should some fortunate inquirer,—contrary to what seems probable at present,—succeed where the genius of NEWTON has failed. If Dr REID has gone farther than this in his conclusions concerning the principles which he calls original or instinctive, he has departed from that guarded language in which he commonly expresses himself;—for all that it was of importance for him to conclude was, that the theories of his predecessors were, in these instances, exceptionable;—and the doubts he may occasionally insinuate, concerning the success of future adventurers, so far from betraying any overweening confidence in his own understanding,

derstanding, are an indirect tribute to the talents of those, from whose failure he draws an argument against the possibility of their undertaking.

The same eagerness to simplify and to generalize, which led PRIESTLEY to complain of the number of REID's instinctive principles, has carried some later philosophers a step farther. According to them, the very word *instinct* is unphilosophical; and every thing either in man or brute, which has been hitherto referred to this mysterious source, may be easily accounted for by experience or imitation. A few instances in which this doctrine appears to have been successfully verified, have been deemed sufficient to establish it without any limitation.

In a very original work, on which I have already hazarded some criticism,

much ingenuity has been employed in analyzing the wonderful efforts which the human infant is enabled to make for its own preservation, the moment after its introduction to the light. Thus, it is observed, that the *fœtus*, while still in the *uterus*, learns to perform the operation of swallowing; and also learns to relieve itself, by a change of posture, from the irksomeness of continued rest: And, therefore, (if we admit these propositions), we must conclude, that some of the actions which infants are vulgarly supposed to perform in consequence of instincts coeval with birth, are only a continuation of actions to which they were determined at an earlier period of their being. The remark is ingenious, and it may perhaps be just; but it does not prove, that *instinct* is an unphilosophical term; nor does it render the operations of the infant less mysterious than they seem to be on the com-

mon

mon supposition. How far soever the analysis, in such instances, may be carried, we must at last arrive at some *phenomenon* no less wonderful than that which we mean to explain:—in other words, we must still admit as an ultimate fact, the existence of an original determination to a particular mode of action salutary or necessary to the animal; and all we have accomplished is to connect the origin of this instinct with an earlier period in the history of the human mind.

The same author has attempted to account, in a manner somewhat similar, for the different degrees in which the young of different animals are able, at the moment of birth, to exert their bodily powers. Thus, calves and chickens are able to walk almost immediately; while the human infant, even in the most favourable situations, is six or even twelve months old before

fore he can stand alone. For this, Dr DARWIN assigns two causes. 1. That the young of some animals come into the world in a more complete state than that of others:—the colt and lamb (for example) enjoying, in this respect, a striking advantage over the puppy and the rabbit. 2. That the mode of walking of some animals, coincides more perfectly than that of others, with the previous motions of the *fœtus in utero*. The struggles of all animals (he observes) in the womb, must resemble their manner of swimming, as by this kind of motion, they can best change their attitude in water. But the swimming of the calf and of the chicken resembles their ordinary movements on the ground, which they have thus learned in part to execute, while concealed from our observation; whereas, the swimming of the human infant differing totally from his manner of walking, he has no opportunity

opportunity of acquiring the last of these arts till he is exposed to our view.—The theory is extremely plausible, and does honour to the author's sagacity; but it only places in a new light that provident care which Nature has taken of all her offspring in the infancy of their existence.

Another instance may contribute towards a more ample illustration of the same subject. A lamb, not many minutes after it is dropped, proceeds to search for its nourishment in that spot where alone it is to be found; applying both its limbs and its eyes to their respective offices. The peasant observes the fact, and gives the name of *instinct*, or some corresponding term, to the unknown principle by which the animal is guided. On a more accurate examination of circumstances, the philosopher finds reason to conclude,

conclude, that it is by the sense of smelling, it is thus directed to its object. In proof of this, among other curious facts, the following has been quoted. “ On  
“ dissecting ” (says GALEN) “ a goat great  
“ with young, I found a brisk *embryon*, and  
“ having detached it from the *matria*, and  
“ snatching it away before it saw its dam,  
“ I brought it into a room where there  
“ were many vessels; some filled with  
“ wine, others with oil, some with honey,  
“ others with milk, or some other liquor;  
“ and in others there were grains and  
“ fruits. We first observed the young  
“ animal get upon its feet and walk; then  
“ it shook itself, and afterwards scratched  
“ its side with one of its feet: then we  
“ saw it smelling to every one of those  
“ things that were set in the room; and  
“ when it had smelt to them all, it drank  
“ up the milk \*.” Admitting this very  
beautiful

beautiful story to be true, (and, for my own part, I am far from being disposed to question its probability), it only enables us to state the fact with a little more precision, in consequence of our having ascertained, that it is to the sense of inclining, the instinctive determination is attached. The conclusion of the peasant is not here at variance with that of the philosopher. It differs only in this, that he expresses himself in those general terms which are suited to his ignorance of the particular process by which Nature in this case accomplishes her end ; and, if he did otherwise, he would be censurable for prejudging a question of which he is incompetent to form an accurate opinion.

The application of these illustrations to some of Dr REID's conclusions concerning the instinctive principles of the human mind, is, I flatter myself, sufficiently manifest.

nifest. They relate, indeed, to a subject which differs, in various respects, from that which has fallen under his more particular consideration ; but the same rules of philosophizing will be found to apply equally to both.

4. To examine in detail the criticisms which have been made on what Dr REID has written concerning the *Principles of Common Sense*, (an article of his philosophy which has been supposed “ to function an  
“ appeal from the decisions of the learned  
“ to the voice of the multitude,”) would lead me into discussions inconsistent with the limits of this Memoir : not that the importance of these criticisms demands a long or elaborate refutation ; but because the subject, according to the view I wish to take of it, involves some other questions of great moment and difficulty, relative to the foundations of human knowledge. Dr PRIESTLEY, the most formidable of  
Dr

Dr REID's opponents, has granted as much in favour of this doctrine as it is worth while to contend for, on the present occasion. " Had these writers" (he observes with respect to Dr REID and his followers) " assumed, as the elements of " their Common Sense, certain truths " which are so plain that no man could " doubt of them, (without entering into " the ground of our assent to them), their " conduct would have been liable to very " little objection. All that could have " been said would have been, that, without any necessity, they had made an innovation in the received use of a term. " For no person ever denied, that there " *are* self-evident truths, and that these " must be assumed as the foundation of " all our reasoning. I never met with " any person who did not acknowledge " this, or heard of any argumentative " treatise that did not go upon the suppo-  
 " sition

“ fition of it \*.” After fuch an acknowledgment, it is impoffible to forbear asking, (with Dr CAMPBELL), “ What is the “ great point which Dr PRIESTLEY “ would controvert? Is it, whether fuch “ felf-evident truths fhall be denominated “ Principles of Common Senfe, or be “ diftinguifhed by fome other appellation †?”

That the doctrine in queftion has been, in fome publications, prefented in a very exceptionable form, I moft readily allow; nor would I be underftood to fubfcribe to it implicitly, even as it appears in the works of Dr REID. It is but an act of juftice to him, however, to request, that his opinions may be judged of from his own works alone, not from thofe of others who may have happened to coincide with him

\* *Examination of Dr REID's Inquiry*, &c. p. 119.

† *Philofophy of Rhetoric*, vol. i. p. 111.—See Note F.

him in certain tenets, or in certain modes of expression ; and that, before any ridicule be attempted on his conclusions concerning the authority of Common Sense, his antagonists would take the trouble to examine in what acceptation he has employed that phrase.

The truths which Dr REID seems, in most instances, disposed to refer to the judgment of this tribunal, might, in my opinion, be denominated more unexceptionably, “ Fundamental Laws of Human “ Belief.” They have been called by a very ingenious foreigner, (M. TREMBLEY of Geneva), but certainly with a singular infelicity of language, *Préjugés Légitimes*.—Of this kind are the following propositions ; “ I am the same person to-day that I was yesterday ;” “ The material world has an existence independent of that of percipient beings ;” “ There

“ There are other intelligent beings in the  
“ universe beside myself ;” “ The future  
“ course of nature will resemble the past.”  
Such truths no man but a philosopher  
ever thinks of stating to himself in words ;  
but all our conduct and all our reasonings  
proceed on the supposition that they are  
admitted. The belief of them is essential  
for the preservation of our animal ex-  
istence ; and it is accordingly coeval with  
the first operations of the intellect.

One of the first writers who introduced  
the phrase *Common Sense* into the technical  
or appropriate language of logic, was Fa-  
ther BUFFIER, in a book entitled, *Traité  
des Premières Verités*. It has since been  
adopted by several authoræ of note in this  
country ; particularly by Dr REID, Dr  
OSWALD and Dr BEATTIE ; by all of  
whom, however, I am afraid, it must be  
confessed, it has been occasionally employ-  
ed

ed without a due attention to precision. The last of these writers uses it \* to denote that power by which the mind perceives the truth of any intuitive proposition ; whether it be an axiom of abstract science ; or a statement of some fact resting on the immediate information of consciousness, of perception, or of memory ; or one of those fundamental laws of belief which are implied in the application of our faculties to the ordinary business of life. The same extensive use of the word may, I believe, be found in the other authors just mentioned. But no authority can justify such a laxity in the employment of language in philosophical discussions ; for, if mathematical axioms be (as they are manifestly and indisputably) a class of propositions essentially distinct from the other kinds of intuitive truths

now

\* *Essay on Truth*, edition second, p. 42. *et seq.* ; also p. 166. *et seq.*

now described, why refer them all indiscriminately to the same principle in our constitution? If this phrase, therefore, be at all retained, precision requires, that it should be employed in a more limited acceptation; and accordingly, in the works under our consideration, it is appropriated most frequently, though by no means uniformly, to that class of Intuitive Truths which I have already called “*Fundamental Laws of Belief\**.” When thus restricted, it conveys a notion, unambiguous at least, and definite; and, consequently, the question about its propriety or impropriety turns entirely on the coincidence of this definition with the meaning of the word as employed in ordinary discourse. Whatever objections, therefore, may be stated to the expression as  
now

\* This seems to be nearly the meaning annexed to the phrase, by the learned and acute author of *the Philosophy of Rhetoric*, vol. i. p. 109. *et seq.*

now defined, will apply to it with additional force, when used with the latitude which has been already censured.

I have said, that the question about the propriety of the phrase *Common Sense* as employed by philosophers, must be decided by an appeal to general practice. For, although it be allowable and even necessary for a philosopher, to limit the acceptance of words which are employed vaguely in common discourse, it is always dangerous to give to a word a scientific meaning essentially distinct from that in which it is usually understood. It has, at least, the effect of misleading those who do not enter deeply into the subject; and of giving a paradoxical appearance to doctrines, which, if expressed in more unexceptionable terms, would be readily admitted.

It appears to me, that this has actually happened in the present instance. The phrase *Common Sense*, as it is generally understood, is nearly synonymous with *Mother-wit*; denoting that degree of sagacity (depending partly on original capacity, and partly on personal experience and observation) which qualifies an individual for those simple and essential occupations which all men are called on to exercise habitually by their common nature. In this acceptance, it is opposed to those mental acquirements which are derived from a regular education and from the study of books; and refers, not to the speculative convictions of the understanding, but to that prudence and discretion which are the foundation of successful conduct. Such is the idea which POPE annexes to the word, when, speaking of good sense, (which means only a more  
than

than ordinary share of common sense), he calls it

“ ——— the gift of Heaven,  
 “ And tho’ no science, fairly worth the seven.”

To speak, accordingly, of appealing from the conclusions of philosophy to common sense, had the appearance, to title-page readers, of appealing from the verdict of the learned to the voice of the multitude; or of attempting to silence free discussion, by a reference to some arbitrary and undefinable standard, distinct from any of the intellectual powers hitherto enumerated by logicians. Whatever countenance may be supposed to have been given by some writers to such an interpretation of this mode of expression, I may venture to assert, that none is afforded by the works of Dr REID. The standard to which he appeals, is neither the creed of a particular sect, nor the in-

ward light of enthusiastic presumption ; but that constitution of human nature without which all the business of the world would immediately cease ;—and the substance of his doctrine amounts merely to this, that those essential laws of belief, to which sceptics have objected when considered in connexion with our scientific reasonings, are implied in every step we take as active beings ; and if called in question by any man in his practical concerns, would expose him universally to the charge of insanity.

In stating this important argument, it were perhaps to be wished, that the subject had been treated with somewhat more of analytical accuracy ; and it is certainly to be regretted, that a phrase should have been employed, so well calculated by its ambiguity to furnish a convenient handle to misrepresentations ; but in the judgment

ment of those who have perused Dr REID's writings with an intelligent and candid attention, these misrepresentations must recoil on their authors ; while they who are really interested in the progress of useful science, will be disposed rather to lend their aid in supplying what is defective in his views, than to reject hastily a doctrine which aims, by the development of some logical principles, overlooked in the absurd systems which have been borrowed from the schools, to vindicate the authority of truths intimately and extensively connected with human happiness.

In the prosecution of my own speculations on the Human Mind, I shall have occasion to explain myself fully, concerning this as well as various other questions connected with the foundations of philosophical Evidence. The new doctrines,  
and

and new phraseology on that subject, which have lately become fashionable among some Metaphysicians in Germany, and which, in my opinion, have contributed not a little to involve it in additional obscurity, are a sufficient proof, that this essential and fundamental article of logic is not as yet completely exhausted.

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IN order to bring the foregoing remarks within some compass, I have found it necessary to confine myself to such objections as strike at the root of Dr REID's Philosophy, without touching on any of his opinions on particular topics, however important. I have been obliged also to compress what I have stated, within narrower limits than were perhaps consistent with complete perspicuity; and to reject many illustrations which crowded

upon me, at almost every step of my progress.

It may not, perhaps, be superfluous to add, that, supposing some of these objections to possess more force than I have ascribed to them in my reply, it will not therefore follow, that little advantage is to be derived from a careful perusal of the speculations against which they are directed. Even they who dissent the most widely from Dr REID's conclusions, can scarcely fail to admit, that as a Writer he exhibits a striking contrast to the most successful of his predecessors, in a logical precision and simplicity of language;—his statement of facts being neither vitiated by physiological hypothesis, nor obscured by scholastic mystery. Whoever has reflected on the infinite importance, in such inquiries, of a skilful use of words as the essential instrument of thought, must

must be aware of the influence which his works are likely to have on the future progress of science ; were they to produce no other effect than a general imitation of his mode of reasoning, and of his guarded phraseology.

It is not indeed every reader to whom these inquiries are accessible ; for habits of attention in general, and still more habits of attention to the *phenomena* of thought, require early and careful cultivation : But those who are capable of the exertion, will soon recognise, in Dr REID's statements, the faithful history of their own minds, and will find their labours amply rewarded by that satisfaction which always accompanies the discovery of useful truth. They may expect, also, to be rewarded by some intellectual acquisitions not altogether useless in their other studies. An author well qualified to judge, from his  
own

own experience, of whatever conduces to invigorate or to embellish the understanding, has beautifully remarked, that “ by turning the soul inward on itself, its forces are concentrated, and are fitted for stronger and bolder flights of science; and that, in such pursuits, whether we take, or whether we lose the game, the chace is certainly of service\*.” In this respect, the philosophy of the mind (abstracting entirely from that pre-eminence which belongs to it in consequence of its practical applications) may claim a distinguished rank among those preparatory disciplines, which another writer of equal talents has happily compared to “ the crops which are raised, not for the sake of the harvest, but to be ploughed in as a dressing to the land †.”

SEC.

\* Preface to Mr BURKE'S *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*

† Bishop BERKELEY'S *Quæriſt*.

## SECTION THIRD.

*Conclusion of the Narrative.*

THE three works to which the foregoing remarks refer, together with the Essay on Quantity, published in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, and a short but masterly Analysis of Aristotle's Logic, which forms an Appendix to the third volume of Lord KAMES's *Sketches*, comprehend the whole of Dr REID's publications. The interval between the dates of the first and last of these amounts to no less than forty years, although he had attained to the age of thirty-eight before he ventured to appear as an author.

With the *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*, he closed his literary career; but he  
continued,

continued, notwithstanding, to prosecute his studies with unabated ardour and activity. The more modern improvements in chemistry attracted his particular notice ; and he applied himself, with his wonted diligence and success, to the study of its new theories and new nomenclature. He amused himself, also, at times, in preparing for a Philosophical Society, of which he was a member, short Essays on particular topics, which happened to interest his curiosity, and on which he thought he might derive useful hints from friendly discussion. The most important of these were, *An Examination of PRIESTLEY'S Opinions concerning Matter and Mind ; Observations on the Utopia of Sir THOMAS MORE ; and Physiological Reflections on Muscular Motion.* This last essay appears to have been written in the eighty-sixth year of his age, and was read by the author to his associates, a few months before his death

“ His thoughts were led to the speculations it contains,” (as he himself mentions in the conclusion) “ by the experience of some of the effects which old age produces on the muscular motions.” —“ As they were occasioned, therefore,” (he adds), “ by the infirmities of age, they will, I hope, be heard with the greater indulgence.”

Among the various occupations with which he thus enlivened his retirement, the mathematical pursuits of his earlier years held a distinguished place. He delighted to converse about them with his friends; and often exercised his skill in the investigation of particular problems. His knowledge of ancient geometry had, not probably been, at any time, very extensive; but he had cultivated diligently those parts of mathematical science which are subservient to the study of Sir ISAAC NEWTON'S

NEWTON's Works. He had a predilection, more particularly, for researches requiring the aid of arithmetical calculation, in the practice of which he possessed uncommon expertness and address. I think, I have sometimes observed in him a slight and amiable vanity connected with this accomplishment.

The revival, at this period of Dr REID's life, of his first scientific propensity, has often recalled to me a remark of Mr SMITH's, That of all the amusements of old age, the most grateful and soothing is a renewal of acquaintance with the favourite studies, and favourite authors, of our youth; a remark which, in his own case, seemed to be more particularly exemplified, while he was re-perusing, with the enthusiasm of a student, the tragic poets of ancient Greece. I heard him at least, repeat the observation more than once, while So-

PHOCLES or EURIPIDES lay open on his table.

In the case of Dr REID, other motives perhaps conspired with the influence of the agreeable associations, to which Mr SMITH probably alluded. His attention was always fixed on the state of his intellectual faculties ; and for counteracting the effects of time on these, mathematical studies seem to be fitted in a peculiar degree. They are fortunately, too, within the reach of many individuals, after a decay of memory disqualifies them for inquiries which involve a multiplicity of details. Such detached problems, more especially, as Dr REID commonly selected for his consideration ; problems where all the *data* are brought at once under the eye, and where a connected train of thinking is not to be carried on from day to day ; will be found, (as I have witnessed with

with pleasure in several instances), by those who are capable of such a recreation, a valuable addition to the scanty resources of a life protracted beyond the ordinary limit.

While he was thus enjoying an old age, happy in some respects beyond the usual lot of humanity, his domestic comfort suffered a deep and incurable wound by the death of Mrs REID. He had had the misfortune, too, of surviving, for many years, a numerous family of promising children; four of whom (two sons and two daughters) died after they attained to maturity. One daughter only was left to him when he lost his wife; and of her affectionate good offices he could not always avail himself, in consequence of the attentions which her own husband's infirmities required. Of this Lady, who is still alive, (the widow of

PATRICK

PATRICK CARMICHAEL, M. D. \*), I shall have occasion again to introduce the name, before I conclude this narrative.

A short extract from a letter addressed to myself by Dr REID, not many weeks after his wife's death, will, I am persuaded, be acceptable to many, as an interesting relic of the Writer.

“ By the loss of my bosom-friend, with  
 “ whom I lived fifty-two years, I am  
 “ brought into a kind of new world, at a  
 “ time of life when old habits are not  
 “ easily forgot, or new ones acquired.  
 “ But

\* A learned and worthy Physician, who, after a long residence in Holland, where he practised medicine, retired to Glasgow. He was a younger son of Professor GERSCHOM CARMICHAEL, who published, about the year 1720, an edition of PUFFENDORFF, *De Officio Hominis et Civis*, and who is pronounced by Dr HUTCHESON, “ by far the best commentator “ on that book.”

“ But every world is God’s world, and I  
 “ am thankful for the comforts he has left  
 “ me. Mrs CARMICHAEL has now the  
 “ care of two old deaf men, and does every  
 “ thing in her power to please them; and  
 “ both are very sensible of her goodness.  
 “ I have more health than at my time of  
 “ life I had any reason to expect. I walk  
 “ about; entertain myself with reading  
 “ what I soon forget; can converse with  
 “ one person, if he articulates distinctly,  
 “ and is within ten inches of my left ear;  
 “ go to church, without hearing one word  
 “ of what is said. You know, I never had  
 “ any pretensions to vivacity, but I am still  
 “ free from languor and *ennui*.

“ If you are weary of this detail, im-  
 “ pute it to the anxiety you express to  
 “ know the state of my health. I wish you  
 “ may have no more uneasiness at my age,  
 “ —being yours most affectionately.”

About

About four years after this event, he was prevailed on by his friend and relation, Dr GREGORY, to pass a few weeks, during the summer of 1796, at Edinburgh. He was accompanied by Mrs CARMICHAEL, who lived with him in Dr GREGORY's house; a situation which united, under the same roof, every advantage of medical care, of tender attachment, and of philosophical intercourse. As Dr GREGORY's professional engagements, however, necessarily interfered much with his attentions to his guest, I enjoyed more of Dr REID's society, than might otherwise have fallen to my share. I had the pleasure, accordingly, of spending some hours with him daily, and of attending him in his walking excursions, which frequently extended to the distance of three or four miles.—His faculties (excepting his memory which was considerably impaired) appeared as vigorous as ever; and, although

although his deafness prevented him from taking any share in general conversation, he was still able to enjoy the company of a friend. Mr PLAYFAIR and myself were both witnesses of the acuteness which he displayed on one occasion, in detecting a mistake, by no means obvious, in a manuscript of his kinsman DAVID GREGORY, on the subject of *Prime and Ultimate Ratios*.—Nor had his temper suffered from the hand of time, either in point of gentleness or of gaiety. “ Instead of repining at the enjoyments of the young, he delighted in promoting them ; and, after all the losses he had sustained in his own family, he continued to treat children with such condescension and benignity, that some very young ones noticed the peculiar kindness of his eye\*.”

M

—In

\* I have borrowed this sentence from a full and elegant character of Dr REID, which appeared a few  
 do.

—In apparent soundness and activity of body, he resembled more a man of sixty than of eighty-seven.

He returned to Glasgow in his usual health and spirits; and continued, for some weeks, to devote, as formerly, a regular portion of his time to the exercise both of body and of mind. It appears, from a letter of Dr CLEGHORN's to Dr GREGORY, that he was still able to work with his own hands in his garden; and he was found by Dr BROWN, occupied in the solution of an algebraical problem of considerable difficulty, in which, after the labour of a day or two, he at last succeeded. It was in the course of the same short interval, that he committed to writing those particulars concerning his ancestors, which I have already mentioned.

This

days after his death, in one of the Glasgow Journals. I had occasion frequently to verify the truth of the observation during his last visit to Edinburgh.

This active and useful life was now, however, drawing to a conclusion. A violent disorder attacked him about the end of September; but does not seem to have occasioned much alarm to those about him, till he was visited by Dr CLEGHORN, who soon after communicated his apprehensions in a letter to Dr GREGORY. Among other symptoms, he mentioned particularly "that alteration of voice and features, which, though not easily described, is so well known to all who have opportunities of seeing life close." Dr REID's own opinion of his case was probably the same with that of his physician; as he expressed to him on his first visit, his hope that he was "soon to get his dismissal." After a severe struggle, attended with repeated strokes of palsy, he died on the 7th of October following. Dr GREGORY had the melancholy satisfaction of visiting his venerable friend on his death-bed,

death-bed, and of paying him this unavailing mark of attachment, before his powers of recollection were entirely gone.

The only surviving descendant of Dr REID is Mrs CARMICHAEL, a daughter worthy in every respect of such a father:—long, the chief comfort and support of his old age, and his anxious nurse in his last moments \*.

In point of bodily constitution, few men have been more indebted to nature than Dr REID. His form was vigorous and athletic; and his muscular force (though he was somewhat under the middle size) uncommonly great;—advantages to which his habits of temperance and exercise, and the unclouded serenity of his temper, did ample justice. His countenance was strongly expressive of deep and collected  
thought;

\* NOTE F.

thought ; but when brightened up by the face of a friend, what chiefly caught the attention was, a look of good will and of kindness. A picture of him, for which he consented, at the particular request of Dr GREGORY, to sit to Mr RAEBURN, during his last visit to Edinburgh, is generally and justly ranked among the happiest performances of that excellent artist. The medallion of TASSIE, also, for which he sat in the eighty-first year of his age, presents a very perfect resemblance.

I have little to add to what the foregoing pages contain with respect to his character. Its most prominent features were, —intrepid and inflexible rectitude ;—a pure and devoted attachment to truth ;—and an entire command (acquired by the unwearied exertions of a long life) over all his passions. Hence, in those parts of his writings where his subject forces him

to dispute the conclusions of others, a scrupulous rejection of every expression calculated to irritate those whom he was anxious to convince ; and a spirit of liberality and good-humour towards his opponents, from which no asperity on their part could provoke him, for a moment, to deviate. The progress of useful knowledge, more especially in what relates to human nature and to human life, he believed to be retarded rather than advanced by the intemperance of controversy ; and to be secured most effectually when intrusted to the slow but irresistible influence of sober reasoning. That the argumentative talents of the disputants might be improved by such altercations, he was willing to allow ; but, considered in their connexion with the great objects which all classes of writers profess equally to have in view, he was convinced “ that  
“ they have done more harm to the prac-  
“ tice,

“ tice, than they have done service to the  
 “ theory of morality \*.”

In private life, no man ever maintained, more eminently or more uniformly, the dignity of philosophy ; combining with the most amiable modesty and gentleness, the noblest spirit of independence. The only preferments which he ever enjoyed, he owed to the unsolicited favour of the two learned bodies who successively adopted him into their number ; and the respectable rank which he supported in society, was the well-earned reward of his own academical labours. The studies in which he delighted, were little calculated to draw on him the patronage of the great ; and he was unskilled in the art of courting advancement, by “ fashion-  
 “ ing his doctrines to the varying hour.”

As

\* Preface to POPE'S *Essay on Man*.

As a philosopher, his genius was more peculiarly characterized by a sound, cautious, distinguishing judgment; by a singular patience and perseverance of thought; and by habits of the most fixed and concentrated attention to his own mental operations;—endowments which, although not the most splendid in the estimation of the multitude, would seem entitled, from the history of science, to rank among the rarest gifts of the mind.

With these habits and powers, he united (what does not always accompany them) the curiosity of a naturalist, and the eye of an observer; and, accordingly, his information about every thing relating to physical science, and to the useful arts, was extensive and accurate. His memory for historical details was not so remarkable; and he used sometimes to regret the imperfect degree in which he possessed

possessed this faculty. I am inclined, however, to think, that in doing so, he underrated his natural advantages; estimating the strength of memory, as men commonly do, rather by the recollection of particular facts, than by the possession of those general conclusions, from a subserviency to which, such facts derive their principal value.

Towards the close of life, indeed, his memory was much less vigorous than the other powers of his intellect; in none of which, could I ever perceive any symptom of decline. His ardour for knowledge, too, remained unextinguished to the last; and, when cherished by the society of the young and inquisitive, seemed even to increase with his years. What is still more remarkable, he retained in extreme old age all the sympathetic tenderness, and all the moral sensibility of youth; the

the liveliness of his emotions, wherever the happiness of others was concerned, forming an affecting contrast to his own unconquerable firmness under the severest trials.

Nor was the sensibility which he retained, the selfish and sterile offspring of taste and indolence. It was alive and active, wherever he could command the means of relieving the distressed or of adding to the comforts of others; and was often felt in its effects, where he was unseen and unknown.—Among the various proofs of this, which have happened to fall under my own knowledge, I cannot help mentioning particularly (upon the most unquestionable authority) the secrecy with which he conveyed his occasional benefactions to his former parishioners at New-Machar, long after his establishment at Glasgow. One donation, in particular, during

during the scarcity of 1782,—a donation which, notwithstanding all his precautions, was distinctly traced to his beneficence,—might perhaps have been thought disproportionate to his limited income, had not his own simple and moderate habits multiplied the resources of his humanity.

His opinions on the most important subjects are to be found in his works ; and that spirit of piety which animated every part of his conduct, forms the best comment on their practical tendency. In the state in which he found the philosophical world, he believed, that his talents could not be so usefully employed, as in combating the schemes of those who aimed at the complete subversion of religion, both natural and revealed ;—convinced with Dr CLARKE, that, “ as Christianity  
 “ presupposes the truth of Natural Reli-  
 “ gion, whatever tends to discredit the  
 “ latter,

“ latter, must have a proportionally greater  
“ effect in weakening the authority of the  
“ former \*.” In his views of both he  
seems to have coincided nearly with Bi-  
shop BUTLER; an author whom he held  
in the highest estimation. A very care-  
ful abstract of the treatise entitled *Analogy*,  
drawn up by Dr REID, many years ago,  
for his own use, still exists among his ma-  
nuscripts; and the short Dissertation on  
Virtue which BUTLER has annexed to that  
work, together with the Discourses on Hu-  
man Nature published in his volume of Ser-  
mons, he used always to recommend as the  
most satisfactory account that has yet ap-  
peared of the fundamental principles of  
Morals: Nor could he conceal his regret,  
that the profound philosophy which these  
Discourses contain, should of late have  
been so generally supplanted in England,  
by

\* *Collection of Papers which passed between LEIB-  
NITZ and CLARKE, See Dr CLARKE's Dedication,*

by the speculations of some other moralists, who, while they profess to idolize the memory of LOCKE, “approve little or “nothing in his writings, but his errors \*.”

Deeply impressed, however, as he was with his own principles, he possessed the most perfect liberality towards all whom he believed to be honestly and conscientiously devoted to the search of truth. With one very distinguished character, the late Lord KAMES, he lived in the most cordial and affectionate friendship, notwithstanding the avowed opposition of their sentiments on some moral questions, to which he attached the greatest importance.

\* I have adopted here the words which Dr CLARKE applied to some of Mr LOCKE's earlier followers. They are still more applicable to many writers of the present times. See CLARKE's *first Reply* to LEIBNIZ.

tance. Both of them, however, were the friends of virtue and of mankind ; and both were able to temper the warmth of free discussion, with the forbearance and good humour founded on reciprocal esteem. No two men, certainly, ever exhibited a more striking contrast in their conversation, or in their constitutional tempers :—the one, slow and cautious in his decisions, even on those topics which he had most diligently studied ; reserved and silent in promiscuous society ; and retaining, after all his literary eminence, the same simple and unassuming manners which he brought from his country residence :—the other, lively, rapid, and communicative ; accustomed, by his professional pursuits, to wield with address the weapons of controversy, and not averse to a trial of his powers on questions the most foreign to his ordinary habits of inquiry. But these characteristic differences, while

to

to their common friends they lent an additional charm to the distinguishing merits of each, served only to enliven their social intercourse, and to cement their mutual attachment.

I recollect few, if any anecdotes, of Dr REID, which appear to me calculated to throw additional light on his character ; and I suspect strongly, that many of those which are to be met with in biographical publications, are more likely to mislead, than to inform. A trifling incident, it is true, may sometimes paint a peculiar feature better than the most elaborate description ; but a selection of incidents really characteristical, presupposes, in the observer, a rare capacity to discriminate and to generalize ; and where this capacity is wanting, a biographer, with the most scrupulous attention to the veracity of his details, may yet convey a very false conception

conception of the individual he would describe. As, in the present instance, my subject afforded no materials for such a choice, I have attempted, to the best of my abilities, (instead of retailing detached fragments of conversations, or recording insulated and unmeaning occurrences), to communicate to others the general impressions which Dr REID's character has left on my own mind. In this attempt, I am far from being confident I have succeeded ; but, how barren soever I may have thus rendered my pages in the estimation of those who consider biography merely in the light of an amusing tale, I have, at least, the satisfaction to think, that my picture, though faint in the colouring, does not present a distorted resemblance of the original.

The confidential correspondence of an individual with his friends, affords to the student

student of human nature, materials of far greater authenticity and importance ;—more particularly, the correspondence of a man like Dr REID, who will not be suspected by those who knew him, of accommodating his letters (as has been alleged of CICERO) to the humours and principles of those whom he addressed. I am far, at the same time, from thinking, that the correspondence of Dr REID would be generally interesting ; or even that he excelled in this species of writing : but few men, I sincerely believe, who have written so much, have left behind them such unblemished memorials of their virtue.

At present, I shall only transcribe two letters, which I select from a considerable number now lying before me, as they seem to accord, more than the others, with the general design of this Memoir.

The first (which is dated January 13. 1779) is addressed to the Reverend WILLIAM GREGORY (now Rector of St Andrew's, Canterbury) then an Undergraduate in Baliol College, Oxford. It relates to a remarkable peculiarity in Dr REID's physical temperament, connected with the subject of dreaming; and is farther interesting as a genuine record of some particulars in his early habits, in which it is easy to perceive the openings of a superior mind.

“ The fact which your brother the Doctor desires to be informed of, was as you mention it. As far as I remember the circumstances, they were as follow :

“ About the age of fourteen, I was, almost every night, unhappy in my sleep from frightful dreams. Sometimes hanging  
“ ing

“ ing over a dreadful precipice, and just  
 “ ready to drop down ; sometimes pur-  
 “ sued for my life, and stopped by a wall,  
 “ or by a sudden loss of all strength ; some-  
 “ times ready to be devoured by a wild  
 “ beast. How long I was plagued with  
 “ such dreams, I do not now recollect. I  
 “ believe it was for a year or two at least ;  
 “ and I think they had quite left me  
 “ before I was fifteen. In those days, I  
 “ was much given to what Mr ADDISON,  
 “ in one of his *Spectators*, calls *Castle-build-*  
 “ *ing* ; and in my evening solitary walk,  
 “ which was generally all the exercise I  
 “ took, my thoughts would hurry me in-  
 “ to some active scene, where I generally  
 “ acquitted myself much to my own sa-  
 “ tisfaction ; and in these scenes of imagi-  
 “ nation I performed many a gallant ex-  
 “ ploit. At the same time, in my dreams  
 “ I found myself the most arrant coward  
 “ that ever was. Not only my courage,  
 “ but

“ but my strength, failed me in every  
“ danger ; and I often rose from my bed  
“ in the morning in such a panic, that it  
“ took some time to get the better of it.  
“ I wished very much to get free of these  
“ uneasy dreams, which not only made  
“ me unhappy in sleep, but often left a  
“ disagreeable impression in my mind for  
“ some part of the following day. I  
“ thought it was worth trying, whether it  
“ was possible to recollect that it was all a  
“ dream, and that I was in no real dan-  
“ ger. I often went to sleep with my  
“ mind as strongly impressed as I could  
“ with this thought, that I never in my life-  
“ time was in any real danger, and that  
“ every fright I had was a dream. After  
“ many fruitless endeavours to recollect  
“ this when the danger appeared, I effected  
“ it at last, and have often, when I was slid-  
“ ing over a precipice into the abyss, recol-  
“ lected that it was all a dream, and boldly  
“ jumped

“ jumped down. The effect of this com-  
“ monly was, that I immediately awoke.  
“ But I awoke calm and intrepid, which I  
“ thought a great acquisition. After this,  
“ my dreams were never very uneasy ;  
“ and, in a short time, I dreamed not at  
“ all.

“ During all this time, I was in perfect  
“ health ; but whether my ceasing to  
“ dream was the effect of the recollection  
“ above mentioned, or of any change in  
“ the habit of my body, which is usual  
“ about that period of life, I cannot tell.  
“ I think it may more probably be im-  
“ puted to the last. However, the fact  
“ was, that, for at least forty years after,  
“ I dreamed none, to the best of my re-  
“ membrance : and finding, from the tes-  
“ timony of others, that this is somewhat  
“ uncommon, I have often, as soon as I  
“ awoke, endeavoured to recollect, without  
“ being

“ being able to recollect, any thing that  
“ passed in my sleep. For some years  
“ past, I can sometimes recollect some  
“ kind of dreaming thoughts, but so in-  
“ coherent that I can make nothing of  
“ them.

“ The only distinct dream I ever had  
“ since I was about sixteen, as far as I re-  
“ member, was about two years ago. I  
“ had got my head blistered for a fall.  
“ A plaster which was put upon it after  
“ the blister, pained me excessively for a  
“ whole night. In the morning I slept a  
“ little, and dreamed very distinctly, that  
“ I had fallen into the hands of a party  
“ of Indians, and was scalped.

“ I am apt to think, that as there is a  
“ state of sleep, and a state wherein we are  
“ awake, so there is an intermediate state,  
“ which partakes of the other two. If a  
“ man

“ man peremptorily resolves to rise at an  
 “ early hour for some interesting purpose,  
 “ he will of himself awake at that hour.  
 “ A sick-nurse gets the habit of sleeping  
 “ in such a manner that she hears the  
 “ least whisper of the sick person, and yet  
 “ is refreshed by this kind of half sleep.  
 “ The same is the case of a nurse who  
 “ sleeps with a child in her arms. I have  
 “ slept on horseback, but so as to preserve  
 “ my balance ; and if the horse stumbled,  
 “ I could make the exertion necessary for  
 “ saving me from a fall, as if I was awake.

“ I hope the sciences at your good Uni-  
 “ versity are not in this state. Yet, from  
 “ so many learned men, so much at their  
 “ ease, one would expect something more  
 “ than we hear of.”

For the other letter, I am indebted to  
 one of Dr REID's most intimate friends,  
 to

to whom it was addressed, in the year 1784, on occasion of the melancholy event to which it alludes.

“ I sympathize with you very sincerely  
“ in the loss of a most amiable wife. I  
“ judge of your feelings by the impression  
“ she made upon my own heart, on a very  
“ short acquaintance. But all the blessings  
“ of this world are transient and uncertain ;  
“ and it would be but a melancholy scene, if, there were no prospect  
“ of another,

“ I have often had occasion to admire  
“ the resignation and fortitude of young  
“ persons, even of the weaker sex, in the  
“ views of death, when their imagination  
“ is filled with all the gay prospects which  
“ the world presents at that period. I  
“ have been witness to instances of this  
“ kind, which I thought truly heroic,  
“ and

“ and I hear Mrs G—— gave a remark-  
 “ able one.

“ To see the soul increase in vigour  
 “ and wisdom, and in every amiable qua-  
 “ lity, when health and strength and ani-  
 “ mal spirits decay ; when it is to be torn  
 “ by violence from all that filled the ima-  
 “ gination, and flattered hope, is a specta-  
 “ cle truly grand, and instructive to the  
 “ surviving. To think, that the soul pe-  
 “ rishes in that fatal moment, when it is  
 “ purified by this fiery trial, and fitted for  
 “ the noblest exertions in another state, is  
 “ an opinion which I cannot help look-  
 “ ing down upon with contempt and dis-  
 “ dain.

“ In old people, there is no more me-  
 “ rit in leaving this world with perfect ac-  
 “ quiescence, than in rising from a feast  
 “ after one is full. When I have before  
 “ me

“ me the prospect of the infirmities, the  
“ distresses and the peccishness of old  
“ age, and when I have already received  
“ more than my share of the good things  
“ of this life, it would be ridiculous indeed  
“ to be anxious about prolonging it ; but  
“ when I was four and twenty, to have had  
“ no anxiety for its continuance, would, I  
“ think, have required a noble effort.  
“ Such efforts in those that are called to  
“ make them, surely shall not lose their  
“ reward.”

\* \* \* \* \*

I HAVE now finished all that the limits of my plan permit me to offer here, as a tribute to the memory of this excellent person. In the details which I have stated, both with respect to his private life and his scientific pursuits, I have dwelt chiefly on such circumstances as appeared to

to

to me most likely to interest the readers of his Works, by illustrating his character as a man, and his views as an author. Of his merits as an instructor of youth, I have said but little ; partly from a wish to avoid unnecessary diffuseness ; but chiefly from my anxiety to enlarge on those still more important labours, of which he has bequeathed the fruits to future ages. And yet, had he left no such monument to perpetuate his name, the fidelity and zeal with which he discharged, during so long a period, the obscure but momentous duties of his official station, would, in the judgment of the wise and good, have ranked him in the first order of useful citizens. —“ *Nec enim is solus reipublicæ prodest, qui candidatos extrahit, et tuetur reos, et de pace belloque censet ; sed qui juventutem exhortatur ; qui, in tantâ bonorum præceptorum inopiâ, virtute instruit animos ; qui, ad pecuniam luxuri-*  
*amque*

“ amque cursu ruentes prensat ac retrahit,  
 “ et, si nihil aliud, certe moratur : in pri-  
 “ vato, publicum negotium agit \*.”

In concluding this Memoir, I trust I shall be pardoned, if, for once, I give way to a personal feeling, while I express the satisfaction with which I now close finally, my attempts as “a Biographer. Those which I have already made, were imposed on me by the irresistible calls of duty and attachment ; and, feeble as they are, when compared with the magnitude of subjects, so splendid and so various, they have encroached deeply on that small portion of literary leisure which indispensable engagements allow me to command. I cannot, at the same time, be insensible to the gratification of having endeavoured to associate, in some degree, my name with three of the greatest which have adorned  
 this

\* SENECA, *De Tranquill. An.* Cap. 3.

this age;—happy, if, without deviating intentionally from truth, I may have succeeded, however imperfectly, in my wish, to gratify, at once, the curiosity of the public, and to sooth the recollections of surviving friends.—But I, too, have designs and enterprizes of my own; and the execution of these (which alas! swell in magnitude, as the time for their accomplishment hastens to a period) claims at length, an undivided attention. Yet I should not look back on the past with regret, if I could indulge the hope, that the facts which it has been my province to record,—by displaying those fair rewards of extensive usefulness, and of permanent fame, which talents and industry, when worthily directed, cannot fail to secure,—may contribute, in one single instance, to foster the proud and virtuous independence of genius; or, amidst the gloom of poverty and solitude, to gild the distant

stant

stant prospect of the unfriended scholar,  
whose laurels are now slowly ripening in  
the unnoticed privacy of humble life.

NOTES.

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## N O T E S\*.

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### NOTE A. Page 6.

**I**N the account, given in the text, of Dr REID's ancestors, I have followed scrupulously the information contained in his own memorandums. I have some suspicion,

\* If another Edition of this Memoir should ever be called for, I must request that the Printer may adhere to the plan which I myself have thought advisable to adopt, in the distribution of my notes. A mistake which has been committed in a late Edition of my Life of Dr ROBERTSON, where a long Appendix is broken down into *foot-notes*, will sufficiently account for this request, to those who have seen that publication.

cion, however, that he has committed a mistake with respect to the name of the translator of BUCHANAN'S *History*; which would appear, from the MS. in Glasgow College, to have been—not ADAM, but JOHN. At the same time, as this last statement rests on an authority altogether unknown, (being written in a hand different from the rest of the MS.), there is a possibility that Dr REID'S account may be correct; and, therefore, I have thought it advisable, in a matter of so very trifling consequence, to adhere to it in preference to the other.

The following particulars with respect to THOMAS REID may, perhaps, be acceptable to some of my readers. They are copied from DEMPSTER, a contemporary writer; whose details concerning his countrymen, it must, however, be confessed,

fed, are not always to be implicitly relied on.

“ THOMAS REIDUS Aberdonensis, pueritiae meae et infantilis otii sub THOMAE CARGILLO collega, Lovanii literas in schola Lipsii serio didicit, quas magno nomine in Germania docuit, carus Principibus. Londini diu in comitatu humanissimi ac clarissimi viri, FULCONIS GREVILLI, Regii Consilarii Interioris et Angliae Proquaestoris, egit : tum ad amicitiam Regis, eodem FULCONE deducte, evehctus, inter Palatinos admissus, à literis Latinis Regi fuit. Scripsit multa, ut est magnâ indole et variâ eruditione,” &c.—“ Ex aula se, nemine conscio, nuper proripuit, dum illi omnia festinati honoris augmenta singuli omerentur, nec quid deinde egerit aut quò locorum se contulerit quisquam indicare potuit. Multi suspicabantur, tædio au-

“ læ affectum, monasticæ quieti seipsum  
 “ tradidisse, sub annum 1618. Rumor post-  
 “ ea fuit in aulam rediisse, et meritissimis  
 “ honoribus redditum, sed nunquam id  
 “ consequetur quod virtus promeretur.”—  
*Hist. Ecclesiastica Gentis Scotorum*, lib. xvi.  
 p. 576.

What was the judgment of THOMAS REID's own times with respect to his genius, and what their hopes of his posthumous fame, may be collected from an elegy on his death by his learned countryman ROBERT AYTOUN. Already, before the lapse of two hundred years, some apology, alas! may be thought necessary for an attempt to rescue his name from total oblivion.

AYTOUN's elegy on REID is referred to in terms very flattering both to its author and to its subject, by the editor of the  
 Collection,

Collection, entitled, “ *Poëtarum Scotorum*  
 “ *Musæ Sacræ.*” “ In obitum THOMÆ  
 “ RHEIDI epicedium extat elegantissimum  
 “ ROBERTI AYTONI, viri literis ac dig-  
 “ nitate clarissimi, in Deliciis Poëtarum  
 “ Scotorum, ubi et ipsius quoque poëmata,  
 “ paucula quidem illa, sed venusta, sed  
 “ elegantia, comparent.”

The only works of ALEXANDER REID  
 of which I have heard, are *Chirurgical*  
*Lectures on Tumors and Ulcers*, London  
 1635; and a *Treatise of the First Part of*  
*Chirurgerie*, London 1638. He appears  
 to have been the physician and friend of  
 the celebrated mathematician THOMAS  
 HARRIOT, of whose interesting history so  
 little was known, till the recent discovery  
 of his manuscripts, by Mr ZACH of Saxe-  
 Gotha.

A remarkable instance of the careless  
 or

or capricious orthography formerly so common in writing proper names, occurs in the different individuals to whom this note refers. Sometimes the family name is written—*Reid*; on other occasions, *Riede*, *Read*, *Rhead*, or *Rbaid*.

NOTE B. Page 10.

Dr TURNBULL's work on Moral Philosophy was published at London in 1740. As I have only turned over a few pages, I cannot say any thing with respect to its merits. The mottos on the title-page are curious, when considered in connexion with those inquiries which his pupil afterwards prosecuted with so much success; and may, perhaps without his perceiving it, have had some effect in suggesting to him that plan of philosophizing which he so systematically and so happily pursued.

“ If

“ If Natural Philosophy, in all its parts,  
 “ by pursuing this method, shall at length  
 “ be perfected, the bounds of Moral Phi-  
 “ losophy will also be enlarged.”

NEWTON'S *Optics*.

“ Account for Moral, as for Natural  
 “ things.” POPE.

For the opinion of a very competent  
 judge with respect to the merits of the  
 Treatise on Ancient Painting, *vide* HO-  
 GARTH'S Print, entitled, *Beer-Lane*.

NOTE C. Page 48.

“ Dr MOOR combined,” &c.]—JAMES  
 MOOR, L L. D. Author of a very ingeni-  
 ous Fragment on Greek Grammar, and  
 of other philological Essays. He was also  
 distinguished by a profound acquaintance  
 with ancient Geometry. Dr SIMSON, an  
 excellent

excellent judge of his merits both in literature and science, has somewhere honoured him with the following encomium :—" Tum in Mathesi, tum in Græcis Literis multum et feliciter versatus."

" The WILSONS, (both father and son)," &c.]—ALEXANDER WILSON, M. D. and PATRICK WILSON, Esq. well known over Europe by their Observations on the Solar Spots; and many other valuable memoirs.

#### NOTE D. Page 111.

A writer of great talents, (after having reproached Dr REID with " a gross ignorance, disgraceful to the university of which he was a member)," boasts of the trifling expence of time and thought which it had cost himself to overturn his Philosophy. " Dr OSWALD is pleased to pay me a compliment in saying that " I  
" might

“ might employ myself to more advan-  
 “ tage to the public, by pursuing other  
 “ branches of science, than by deciding  
 “ rashly on a subject which he sees I have  
 “ not studied.” In return to this compli-  
 “ ment, I shall not affront him, by telling  
 “ him how very little of my time this bu-  
 “ siness has hitherto taken up. If he al-  
 “ ludes to my *experiments*, I can assure  
 “ him, that I have lost no time at all ;  
 “ for having been intent upon such as re-  
 “ quire the use of a burning lens, I believe  
 “ I have not lost one hour of sunshine on  
 “ this account. And the public may per-  
 “ haps be informed, some time or other,  
 “ of what I have been doing in the *sun*, as  
 “ well as in the *shade*.”—*Examination of*  
 REID'S *Inquiry*, &c. p. 357. See also  
 pp. 101, 102. of the same work.

## NOTE E. Page 154.

The following strictures on Dr PRIESTLEY's *Examination*, &c. are copied from a very judicious note in Dr CAMPBELL'S *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Vol. I. p. 111.

——“ I shall only subjoin two remarks  
“ on this book. The first is, That the  
“ author, through the whole, confounds  
“ two things totally distinct,—certain af-  
“ sociations of ideas, and certain judg-  
“ ments implying belief, which, though in  
“ *some*, are not in *all* cases, and therefore  
“ not *necessarily* connected with association.  
“ And if so, merely to account for the af-  
“ sociation, is in no case to account for  
“ the belief with which it is attended.  
“ Nay, admitting his plea, (p. 86.), that  
“ by the principle of association, not only  
“ the ideas, but the concomitant belief  
“ may

“ may be accounted for, even this does  
 “ not invalidate the doctrine he im-  
 “ pugn. For, let it be observed, that  
 “ it is one thing to assign a cause, which,  
 “ from the mechanism of our nature,  
 “ has given rise to a particular tenet  
 “ of belief, and another thing to pro-  
 “ duce a reason by which the understand-  
 “ ing has been convinced. Now, unless  
 “ this be done as to the principles in que-  
 “ stion, they must be considered as pri-  
 “ mary truths in respect of the under-  
 “ standing, which never deduced them  
 “ from other truths, and which is under  
 “ a necessity, in all her moral reasonings,  
 “ of founding upon them. In fact, to  
 “ give any other account of our convic-  
 “ tion of them, is to confirm, instead of  
 “ confuting the doctrine, that in all argu-  
 “ mentation they must be regarded as  
 “ primary truths, or truths which reason  
 “ never inferred through any medium,  
 “ from

“ from other truths previously perceived.  
“ My second remark is, That though this  
“ examiner has, from Dr REID, given us  
“ a catalogue of first principles, which he  
“ deems unworthy of the honourable place  
“ assigned them, he has no where thought  
“ proper to give us a list of those self-evi-  
“ dent truths, which, by his own account,  
“ and in his own express words, “ must  
“ be assumed as the foundation of all our  
“ reasoning.” How much light might  
“ have been thrown upon the subject by  
“ the contrast ! Perhaps we should have  
“ been enabled, on the comparison, to  
“ discover some distinctive characters in  
“ his genuine axioms, which would have  
“ preserved us from the danger of con-  
“ founding them with their spurious ones.  
“ Nothing is more evident than that, in  
“ whatever regards matter of fact, the  
“ mathematical axioms will not answer.  
“ These are purely fitted for evolving the  
“ abstract

“ abstract relations of quantity. This he  
 “ in effect owns himself (p. 39.) It would  
 “ have been obliging, then, and would  
 “ have greatly contributed to shorten the  
 “ controversy, if he had given us, at least,  
 “ a specimen of those self-evident prin-  
 “ ciples, which, in his estimation, are the  
 “ *non plus ultra* of moral reasoning.”

NOTE F. Page 180.

Dr REID's father, the Reverend  
 LEWIS REID, married, for his second  
 wife, JANET, daughter of Mr FRASER of  
 Phopachy, in the county of Inverness.  
 A daughter of this marriage is still alive ;  
 the wife of the Reverend ALEXANDER  
 LESLIE, and the mother of the Reverend  
 JAMES LESLIE, ministers of Fordoun.  
 To the latter of these gentlemen, I am  
 indebted for the greater part of the in-  
 formation I have been able to collect  
 with

with respect to Dr REID, previous to his removal to Glasgōw ;—Mr LESLIE's regard for the memory of his uncle having prompted him, not only to transmit to me such particulars as had fallen under his own knowledge, but some valuable letters on the 'same subject, which he procured from his relations and friends in the north.

For all the members of this most respectable family, Dr REID entertained the strongest sentiments of affection and regard. During several years before his death, a daughter of Mrs LESLIE's, was a constant inmate of his house, and added much to the happiness of his small domestic circle.

Another daughter of Mr LEWIS REID was married to the Reverend JOHN ROSE, minister of Udney. She died in 1793.—  
In

In this connexion, Dr REID was no less fortunate than in the former; and to Mr ROSE I am indebted for favours of the same kind with those which I have already acknowledged from Mr LESLIE.

The widow of Mr LEWIS REID died in 1798, in the eighty-seventh year of her age; having survived her step-son, Dr REID, more than a year.

The limits within which I was obliged to confine my biographical details, prevented me from availing myself of many interesting circumstances which were communicated to me through the authentic channels which I have now mentioned. But I cannot omit this opportunity of returning to my different correspondents, my warmest acknowledgments for the pleasure and instruction which I received from their letters.

Mr

Mr JARDINE, also, the learned Professor of Logic in the University of Glasgow, a gentleman, who, for many years, lived in habits of the most confidential intimacy with Dr REID and his family, is entitled to my best thanks for his obliging attention to various queries, which I took the liberty to propose to him, concerning the history of our common friend.

*FINIS.*

## ERRATA.

P. 45. l. 7. from the bottom, for 1763, read 1764,

P. 54. l. 3., for 1781 read 1780

Same page, lines 5. and 6, *dele* the words *upwards of*



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